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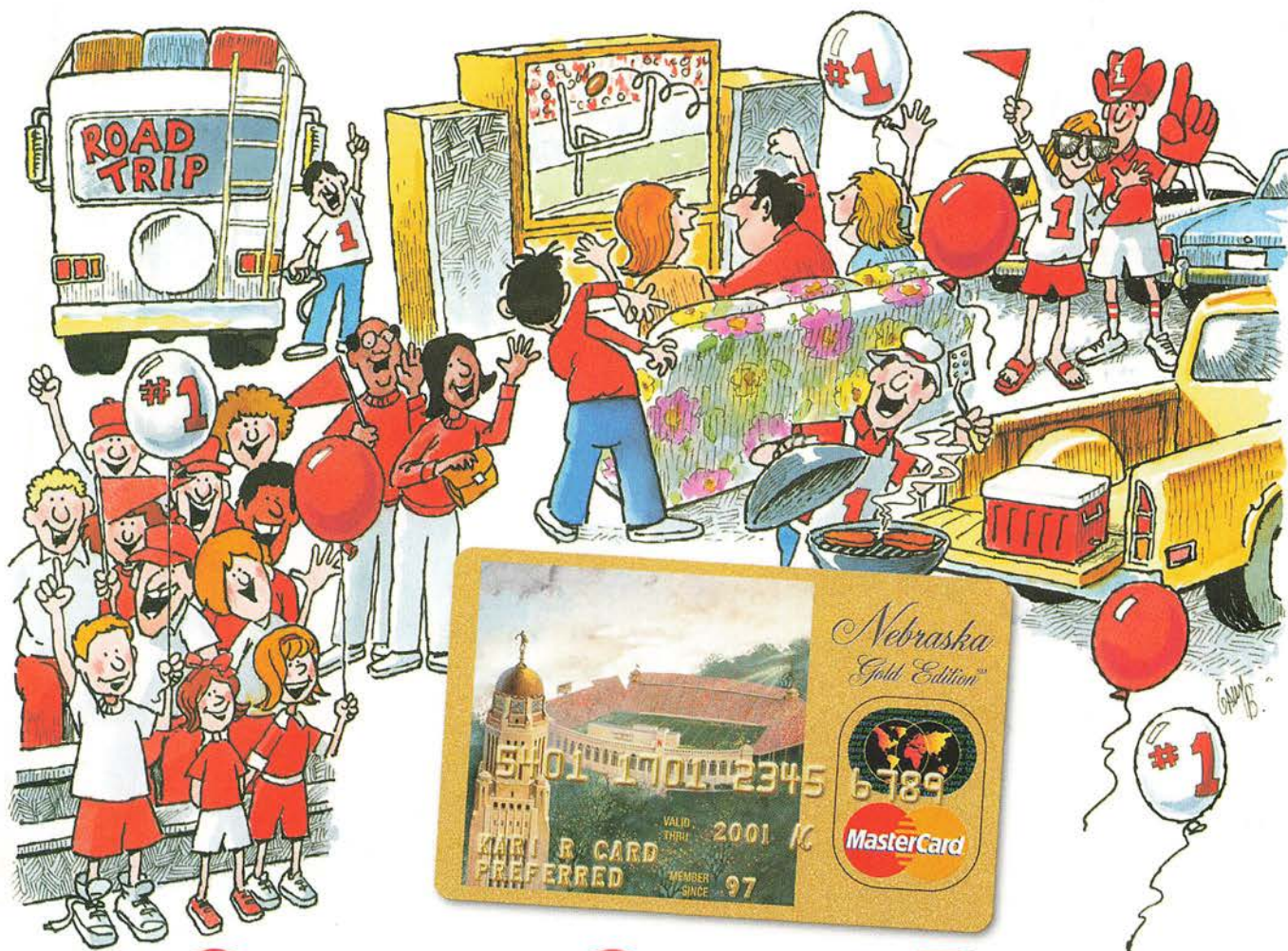
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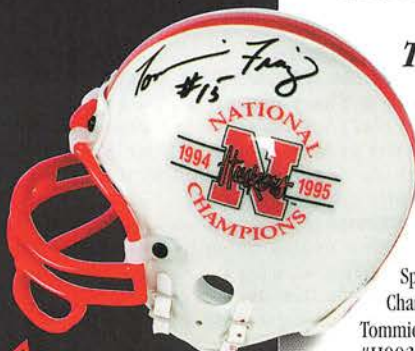
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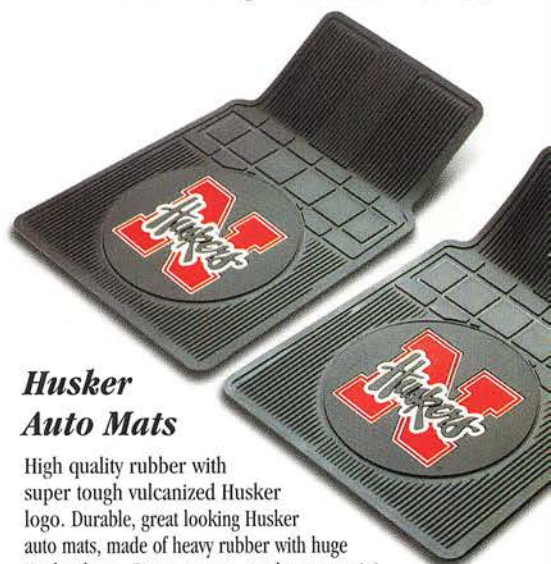
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By Mike Babcock

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By Mike Babcock

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Texas Troubles

It is a sad day for Nebraska football. The streak has ended in Solich's first year as head coach. The loss to Texas could be the end of a dynasty. The Miami Hurricanes lost a home winning streak to Washington in 1994, and then lost to Nebraska in the Orange Bowl that season, and they haven't been the same since. The program has to reassess its strategy in dealing with the new college football environment. Texas being the spoiler twice in a row and losing to Texas A&M this year should be cause for major concern. Just as the Huskers devised a strategy in dealing with the Florida schools in the early '90s, so they must now do against the Texas schools. Now is not the time to be complacent. If we can't win the battle on the gridiron this year, we must win it in recruiting. Texas leads the nation in verbal commitments from exceptional players, which is, again, cause for concern. We can't let teams be bigger, stronger and faster, as the Longhorns were.

TVV, via E-mail
Dutchess County, N.Y.

Lone Star Fans

We wanted to let you know that some of Nebraska's biggest fans live in Texas. We record every game throughout the season so we can watch the Huskers year round. Our two-year-old son, Jake, chants "Go Big Red!" and yells "Touchdown" with every score. He's already training to be Nebraska's future star I-back.

By the way, we think Frank Solich is doing a great job in his first year as head coach. Replacing a legend isn't an easy task, and you have to give him a chance.

Jeff and Sharon Davidson
Beaumont, Texas



Jake Davidson: Nebraska, class of 2018.

Wakeup Call

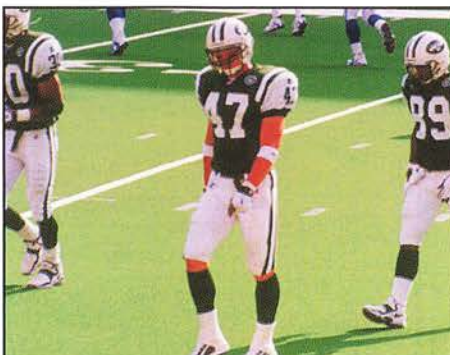
All Husker fans' suspicions that this year's team has no heart became reality in Lincoln of all places. The Huskers should not be 4-2 in the Big 12 at this point in the season. Where do you place the blame? Is it the offensive line, the defensive backs or the coaching? I think anyone could make a great case for all of the above. Two of our three national championships came after disappointing losses to Florida St. and Texas. The other was the work of the same great team that won the year before. I guess the Huskers have gotten too accustomed to winning and need a mediocre season to get them back where they should be.

Paul
Denver, Colo.

Scott Frost Sighting

As a huge Nebraska fan and a New York Jets season ticket holder, I've kept my eye on Scott Frost. In week three against the Indianapolis Colts, he was in on kickoffs and returns, as well as punts and punt returns. He also saw his first action at safety, which put him head to head against Peyton Manning, his last college foe. The Jets won, 44-6. You may not recognize him in Kelly green, but No. 47 is Scott Frost.

Jim Stewart Jr.
Old Bridge, N.J.



A familiar face in an unfamiliar position
— Jets' free safety Scott Frost.

Got Something To Say?

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BIG 12 NEWS

Notes And Quotes From Around The League

MICHAEL, WE HARDLY KNEW YOU

If Texas' tailback **Ricky Williams** wins the 1998 Heisman Trophy, he should send a thank-you note to Kansas State coach **Bill Snyder**. Williams doesn't know it, but Snyder's his new best friend.

The Heisman is supposed to go to college football's best player. And we agree that Williams is a fabulous player and terrific role model for the game. We're just not sure if he's even the best player in the Big 12 Conference. Some people believe the Big 12's top Heisman candidate should be KSU quarterback **Michael Bishop**.

There is one problem, however, and it's the ever-controlling Snyder. He has apparently decided that Bishop, who has a cannon for an arm, becomes too loose a cannon whenever he opens his mouth in front of the media. Therefore, King Bill has made Bishop off limits to the media for the last month. The media-ban decree came down from on high — out of Snyder's office — shortly after Bishop told a sportswriter that K-State tailback **Frank Murphy** had predicted he'd score off an 80-yard the first time he touched the ball against Colorado. The CU-K-State game Oct. 10 was Murphy's first appearance in a Wildcats' uniform.

Ever the control freak, Snyder freaked out when he learned that Colorado used the Bishop-Murphy story as bulletin board material the week the Buffs played the Wildcats. Bishop hasn't talked since.

Snyder undoubtedly thinks he's doing the right thing and helping his team and protecting Bishop. Wrong. He's severely hurting Bishop's Heisman chances because nobody knows anything about this terrific player other than what they see in games or on tape.

When Bishop didn't appear for post-game interviews after he had an outstanding performance against Oklahoma State, Snyder explanation was "we have a date."

What does that mean? Snyder's weak attempt at humor, apparently.

Thanks to interviews they've given for months to various media outlets, we know all about both sides of Heisman candidates like Williams, Kentucky quarterback **Tim Couch** and UCLA quarterback **Cade McNown**. All we know about Bishop is that he leads the Big 12 in passing efficiency and total offense and is 11th in rushing.

OK, he's a great athlete. As for the human side? Sadly, thanks to Snyder, we many never know the real Bishop as long as he's at K-State.



Last season, Snyder muzzled Bishop for a month when the KSU quarterback questioned some of his teammates' heart after losing to Nebraska.

SHORT SHOTS

• Kansas quarterback **Zac Wegner** was lost for the season after suffering concussion on successive weekends against Colorado and Kansas State. Coach **Terry Allen** said Wegner, a junior, may never play again.

"He may be done done," Allen said. "I may be overreacting here, but anytime you have somebody get two consecutive concussions, I worry for his health. And I'm talking longtime health."

• Former Notre Dame coach **Lou Holtz** has been mentioned as a candidate at Oklahoma if the Sooners fire or reassign **John Blake** after this season. That probably won't happen, but Texas A&M coach **R.C. Slocum** thinks Holtz will soon return to the profession.

"I think Lou's got enough coach in him that I would almost say the opposite," Slocum said. "I'd be surprised if he didn't get back in coaching."

• Add **Mack Brown** to the list of coaches who have come away from playing at Nebraska impressed with the gameday atmosphere around the Husker program.

"I've never seen fans as classy as the ones at Nebraska," Brown said. "They do a great job of being loud and supporting their team without being abusive toward the other team. I think it's something all of us across the nation can learn from. You support your team but still have class, and Nebraska does it in the finest fashion."

• Kansas State a national title contender? "They are as good as anybody in the country," Colorado coach **Rick Neuheisel** said. "I've seen UCLA. I've seen Ohio State. Kansas State can play right with those guys."

Baylor coach **Dave Roberts** on the Wildcats: "It's a lot like watching Nebraska last year. If these guys are No. 2, I'd like to see who's No. 1." ■ — **Dave Sittler**

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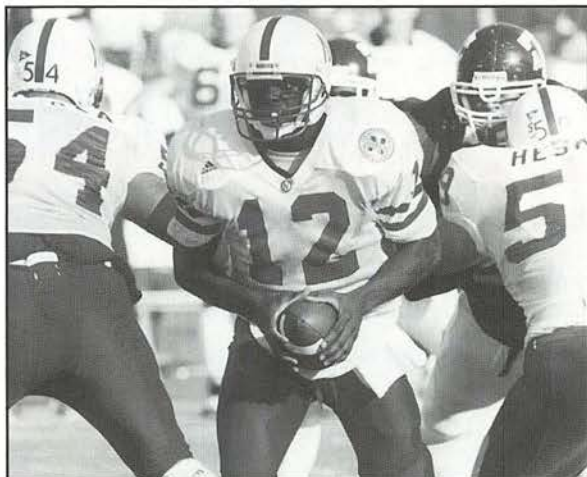
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Bob Beatty



A second opinion has Newcombe's dad doubtful his son will return to the lineup in '98.

Wheel Of Misfortune

Sometimes spinning out of control, the revolving door at quarterback has taken its toll on the team this year

The more, the merrier. Except at quarterback. The best situation is usually to have one quarterback who is experienced and healthy who can lead the team all season.

That has been painfully apparent at the University of Nebraska this season.

"It can make a difference," coach **Frank Solich** said during his weekly news conference on the Tuesday after the Texas loss.

"Believe me, I would have liked to have settled on a quarterback the very first ballgame and had that hold up throughout the course of the year, that kind of continuity.

"We've had the fortune of having that happen here at Nebraska, if you go back through the history of our

quarterbacks. And so I would have liked to have had that happen all season long."

Injuries to sophomore **Bobby Newcombe** and redshirt freshman

Eric Crouch, however, prevented the Cornhuskers from having that all-important continuity at the quarterback position.

Newcombe was tabbed as the starter following spring practice. He beat out Crouch and Frankie London in a hotly-contested, much publicized battle for the position.

"Things could change, not only at that position but at every position on our team," Solich said at the start of two-a-day practices in August. "But in order for a guy to lose a starting position once he's earned it during spring

"The good news is, it looks like he can eventually return to his old self. It's just a question of how long and by what means."

Robert Newcombe, Bobby's father

ball . . . it would have to be a real dropoff of play by the starter."

Or an injury.

Newcombe suffered what was diagnosed as a partial tear in his left posterior cruciate ligament in Nebraska's season-opening win against Louisiana Tech. Although the injury wasn't considered to be serious at the time, Crouch started against Alabama-Birmingham and California.

Before he could build momentum, however, Crouch was sidelined by injuries. He missed the Washington game because of a hamstring pull and then, after a brief appearance against Oklahoma State, missed three games because of a hip-pointer. He came off the bench against Texas and helped spark the Cornhuskers to a comeback that saw them take the lead in the fourth quarter.

Fifth-year senior **Monte Christo** started against the Longhorns after relieving Newcombe and directing the Cornhuskers' second-half comeback in their 20-13 victory against Missouri.

Confused?

Newcombe, who didn't play in the Texas game, went home to Albuquerque, N.M., the week of the Iowa State game to get additional opinions on his knee, which wasn't improving.

Doctors at the University of New Mexico determined that the posterior cruciate ligament was completely torn and that there was a slight cartilage tear, as well as a bone bruise, Newcombe's father told the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

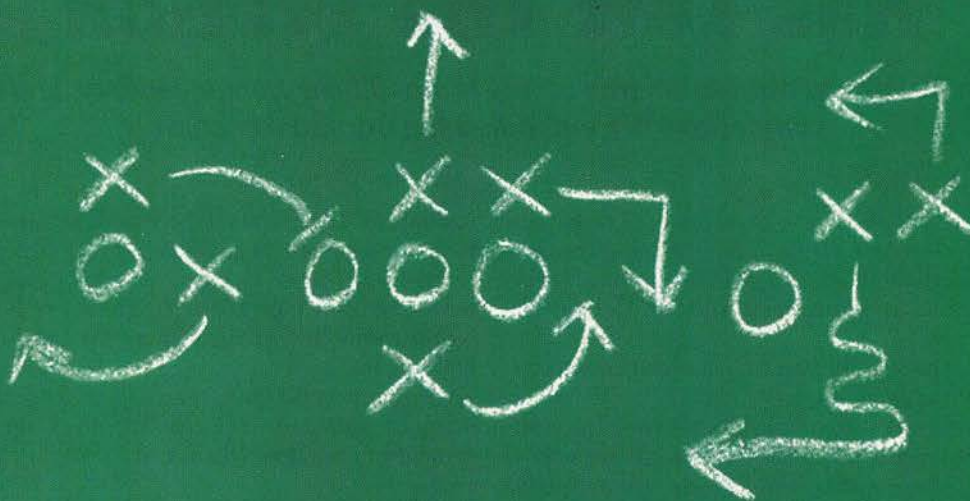
"The good news is, it looks like he can eventually return to his old self," **Robert Newcombe** was quoted as saying. "It's just a question of how long and by what means.

"My concern is for his future. We don't need to rush." ■

Scott Bruhn



Eric Crouch has shown he is capable of running the Nebraska offense, but injuries have slowed his development.



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The "Train" Has Left The Station

Tom Novak's accomplishments on the football field were legendary, and his competitive fire embodied the Cornhusker spirit



**Mike
BABCOCK**

TOM NOVAK was involved in 17 tackles in the span of 21 plays during the Nebraska football team's 31-0 loss against Notre Dame at South Bend, Ind., in October of 1947.

That's according to a newspaper account of the game, anyway.

Novak's accomplishments were the stuff of legend when they occurred. He was a gridiron giant, even though he stood only 5-foot-10 and weighed 205 pounds. He played with a competitive fire that made him the embodiment of the Cornhusker spirit.

Novak was grit personified. He was mangled iron, twisted steel. He was as unyielding, as devastating and destructive on a football field as his nickname implied. He was "Trainwreck."

And he inspired the kind of exaggeration that once characterized sports reporting.

"My eyes have never seen Tom Novak's equal at any position," said the late Lyell Bremser, himself a legend as a radio broadcaster who recounted the exploits of those such as Novak.

"As football players go, the Good Lord made Tom Novak then threw away the mold."

On Nov. 1, the Good Lord reclaimed the original, and took Novak home.

Novak, who had endured a series of illnesses, was 72. But to those still around to remember, he was always in his mid-20s, the Cornhusker in jersey No. 60, asking no quarter and giving none.

He played with reckless abandon, often against insurmountable odds. After the Notre Dame game in 1947, a sportswriter for the *Chicago Tribune* described the Nebraska players as a "tough, stubborn bunch of roughnecks . . . big, brutal, and at times, they performed with murder in their hearts."

Notre Dame quarterback Johnny Lujack, the Heisman Trophy winner in 1947, said he had never played against a tougher linebacker than Novak, who earned a standing ovation from the fans.

Bobby Reynolds, another Nebraska legend, called Novak "Dick Butkus before there was Dick Butkus."

Novak was driven to succeed by a desire for attention, which he traced to his days at Omaha South High School. After seeing a newspaper photograph of himself playing

football, he once recalled, he was determined that "my picture or my name was going to be in the paper."

He was 21 when he enrolled at Nebraska, following military service in World War II. The story is that he visited Notre Dame, intending to play for coach Frank Leahy's Fighting Irish.

During his visit, he asked Leahy if he could put on a helmet and pads and work out with the team. Leahy said he could, but only if he committed to playing for Notre Dame on the spot.

Novak said he couldn't commit, and after he returned to Omaha, he was persuaded by his high school coach, Corny Collin, to go to Nebraska so that his parents could watch him play.

It was Collin who gave him the nickname "Trainwreck."

Novak distinguished himself at Nebraska during lean seasons (11-26 in his four seasons) under three coaches, beginning with Bernie Masterson and including George "Potsy" Clark and Bill Glassford.

Novak was an all-conference honoree in each of his Nebraska seasons and was an All-Big Six fullback as a freshman, then moved to center on offense, at his own request — he wasn't fast enough to play fullback, he told Masterson.

Novak always played linebacker on defense, which was the showcase for his talents.

The jersey number he wore as a senior, 60, was retired by the Nebraska letterman's club immediately after he finished, and it is now the only retired Cornhusker football number.

When the Huskers returned to Lincoln after the Notre Dame game in 1947, they were greeted at the Burlington train station by university students who led them in a short parade down O Street. Before the parade began, the students called for Novak to speak on behalf of the team.

Novak's speech was brief. "They weren't as tough as I thought they'd be," he said of the Irish.

Even though the team had lost and been shut out, he hadn't given up.

In November of 1976, Novak fell and suffered a spinal injury that left him confined to a wheelchair. He never lamented his fate, however. As in everything else he did, he refused to accept defeat.

He met things head-on, never backing down.

That's the Cornhusker tradition, from Guy Chamberlin to Ed Weir to Novak on down. ■



Novak (above) was called "Dick Butkus before there was Dick Butkus" by fellow Nebraska legend, Bobby Reynolds.

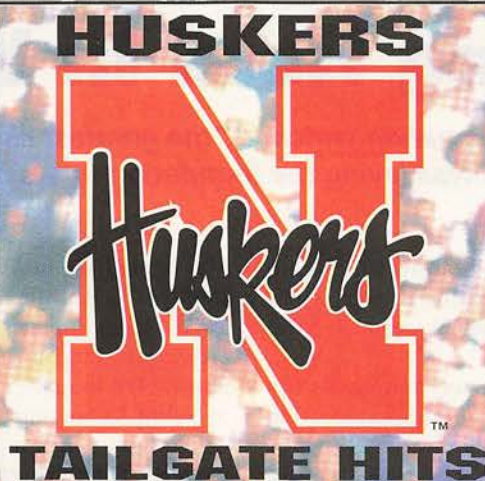
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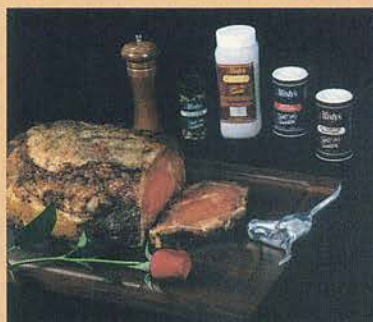
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Boys Of Spring Working Hard In Winter

While the rest of the nation watched "the greatest season ever" in MLB, Husker baseball was laying the foundation for its own turnaround



**Bill
DOLEMAN**

EVEN BEFORE the final out was recorded, *Sports Illustrated* dubbed the recently completed major league baseball season as "The Greatest Season Ever."

Many other pundits and commentators followed suit. There's no question that the home run record chase between Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa was riveting and, at times, heartwarming. The Yankees were unbeatable. The Padres were respectable. And the Cubs at least made the playoffs.

Baseball still has problems — high salaries and low attendance among them.

But after the debacle of 1994, when the World Series was cancelled due to a players' strike, the boys of summer at least took a few steps in the right direction.

The Nebraska baseball team ended its 1998 campaign six months ago. At 24-20, few would call it the program's "greatest season ever," but there's no argument that it was a giant leap forward into a very bright future. According to coach Dave Van Horn, there's been no letting up as he and his staff rebuild Nebraska's Big Red machine.

"No one took a vacation," he said recently. "It's all about recruiting, and we've done a lot of it. Right now, we're all pretty tired, but you have to do it every day because recruiting is a never-ending process."

In addition to recruiting for the early signing period (Nov. 11-18), Van Horn and company went through four weeks of fall practice in preparation for the 1999 season, which is still four months away. While the road and the hours are long, even though all is quiet at Buck Beltzer Stadium, you get the feeling that the new architect of Big Red baseball is anxious to roll back the tarp and unveil his second edition.

"I really feel like things are going real good," Van Horn said. "Fall practice went by fast, but it was productive. The kids that we have coming back are the best we had in the program last year."

"We have a good combination of younger and older players, and the camaraderie was real good. They really bonded together well, and you can just tell that the attitude is better."

"We're going to have our good days and our bad days, but we are going to be better."

It has been a remarkable year for Van Horn. When he

was named the new baseball coach at Nebraska on Jan. 7, 1998, he had a little over a month to get his team prepared for its season opener at Minnesota. A couple of days after arriving in Lincoln, he was a guest coach on "The Husker Show." We thought it would be a nice way to welcome him to Nebraska and introduce him to Big Red fans.

His only request: "Just don't ask me the names of the players." Forget practice. Pass the name tags.

That was a long time ago, which means he can laugh about it now — and it's OK to share the story. It's a problem that Van Horn no longer has. He knows his team well and vice-versa. He made quite an impression during his first season as head coach, and the rest of the country is taking note, as are some of the top players in the nation.

"We recruit the best in the country," said Van Horn.

"The biggest challenge is getting them on campus, and we're doing that. We've had some guys come in here who have taken their five visits to LSU, Wichita State, Arizona State, Oklahoma State and Nebraska, and coaches will call them and ask: 'Nebraska? Why Nebraska?' That's kind of fun."

The Kansas City native also knows that Nebraskans love to watch Nebraskans become Huskers. So while he and his assistants, Rob Childress and Mike Anderson, cover the country for the nation's top talent, they've also been at work tending to the Big Red's backyard.

"I feel like we're getting on top of things and moving in the right direction within the state," Van Horn said. "By the end of

the summer, we pretty much identified the top players here and in the Midwest. We may not have seen them all play in person, but we have done our best to get things under control from our standpoint. I've been to the Nebraska High School Baseball Coaches Association meetings twice and spoken to them and thanked them for their support. We want them to be proud of the program as well."

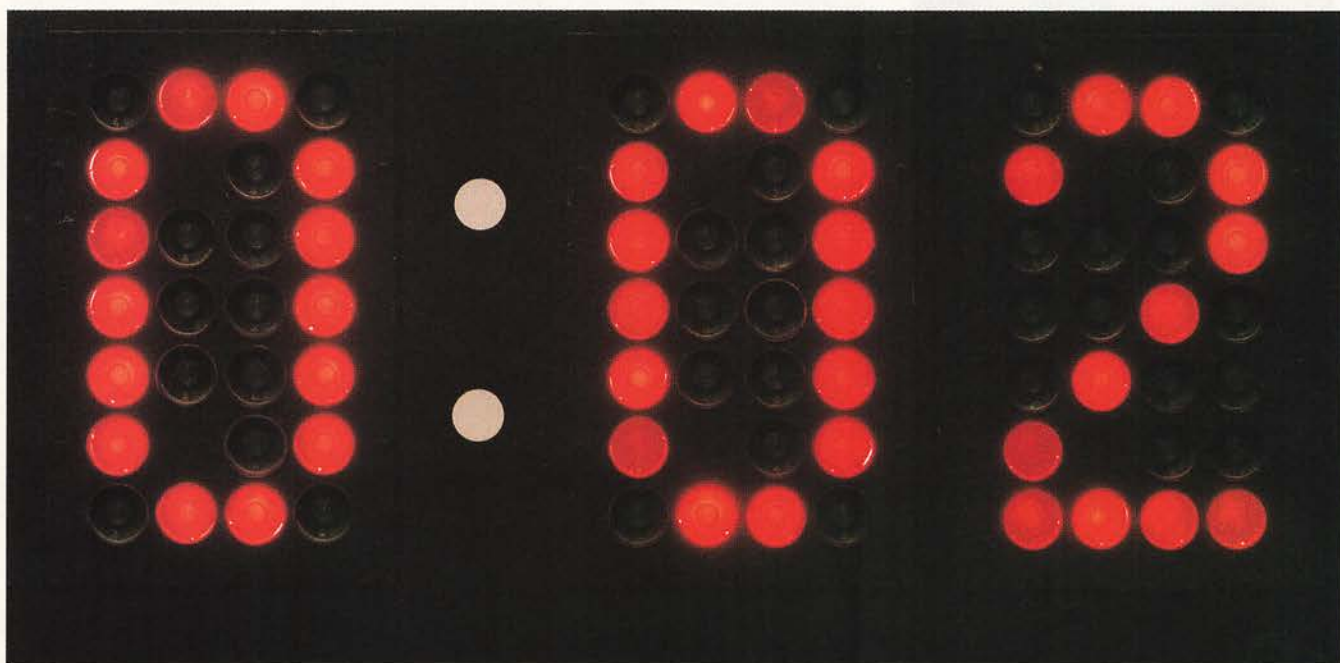
Van Horn's long-range plans for the program include a new home for the Huskers that could be in place within the next two years. But in the meantime, he's laying a solid foundation for his program with a firm belief that Nebraska baseball's "greatest seasons ever" are just ahead. ■



Van Horn admits the Huskers will have good and bad days this season, but overall the squad is going to be better than last year's 24-20 record.

Bill Doleman's face is familiar to Cornhusker fans. He is host for several Nebraska-related television programs including the "Husker Show" and coaches' shows for Terry Pettit, Paul Sanderford and Frank Solich.

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Random QUOTES Frank Solich

"Coaching is always a matter of tinkering. When you're putting your game plan together, you're always looking for ways to give yourself a little bit of an edge."

"There are going to be those times where you try to put the pressure on the defense, and you don't huddle up. If there was confusion, if we were questioning what was going to be called . . . there were blank stares on some of the receivers' faces after the play was signaled in, then you have them huddle up."

"We want all the pressure we can get when it comes to wins and where we're ranked. I'm open to receiving all that kind of pressure. Our ballclub is open to receiving all that kind of pressure."

"The bar's set awfully high. But it's set high because of what's been accomplished here in the past, especially the past four to five years. That has raised the bar considerably."

"You go back further than that, the bar isn't quite as high. But I knew that when I took this job. The players knew that when they came to this program. And so we accept that."

"I'm going to tell you a lot of things here, but I'm not going to tell you everything that we're going to be doing . . . some things I will not just volunteer, and sometimes even if asked."

"You can practice all you want, and I think you're going to get yourself in good condition."

"But when I talk about 'playing condition,' I mean stepping on the field, being able to take 25 to 30 snaps a game and keep coming hard, be strong at the end of the fourth quarter."

"Our offense has always been the type that's wanted to have the 10- to 12-play drives, without many mistakes, and to wear people down. I kind of want it all. I want the big plays. I want the long drives."



QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

OSBORNE TO COACH AGAIN?

Osborne apparently hasn't ruled out coaching again. "It's possible," he told **C. Jemal Horton** of *The Washington Post*. "I doubt it. It could happen. I guess I'm going to see how this year plays out."

"If I can live without (football), then I probably won't go back into it. If I can't live without it, then it's something I might consider again. My health is good; I feel good."

"My grandchildren are here in Lincoln, and it would be hard to leave them. I'm comfortable here. But on the other hand, long-term professionally I don't know what there is for me here."

Horton's story appeared in the Post's Oct. 25, 1998, editions.

"I really miss it," Osborne said of coaching.

He reiterated that his decision to step aside after 25 seasons "was more that I had made some commitments that I had to honor . . . to my family and to people on the (coaching) staff. There were parts of me that would have liked to coach a few more years, but basically it came down to I was going to keep my word or I wasn't. I just didn't feel right about not doing what I said I was going to do."

Osborne is teaching two university classes this semester.

The text for his football coaching class was written by **Bill Walsh**.

"Teaching is good for me right now," Osborne said.

RARE WALK-ON STARTERS

Fifth-year senior **Monte Christo** became at least the fifth walk-on to start at quarterback for Nebraska since 1973, **Tom Osborne's** first season as head coach. The others have included **Matt Turman** (1994), **Travis Turner** (1984), **Tim Hager** (1979) and **Steve Runty** (1973).

Runty, the father of current walk-on quarterback **Jay Runty**, started Osborne's first game as head coach, directing a 40-13 victory against UCLA on Sept. 8, 1973. Runty was a senior who walked on from Ogallala, Neb., High School. He was starting in place of an injured **Dave Humm**.

Hager played for Cornhusker coach **Frank Solich** at Lincoln Southeast High School.

Turner was from Scottsbluff, Neb., and Turman, of course, was from Wahoo, Neb. His only start came against Kansas State at Manhattan in 1994, as a result of **Tommie Frazier's** being sidelined by a blood-clot problem and **Brook Berringer's** recovering from a partially collapsed lung and cracked ribs.

Turner started half the 1984 season, after **Craig Sundberg** was slowed by injury, and Hager started seven games after coming off the bench to lead a 24-21 victory at Iowa in 1979.

CAUTION, HEAVY LOAD

Sophomore I-back **Dan Alexander**, who stands six feet tall and weighs 250 pounds, has run the 40-yard dash in 4.53 seconds. "I've never been around a running back that big, with that much speed," running backs coach **Dave Gillespie** told the *Lincoln Journal Star*. "He's very unique."

Alexander's 5.3-percent body fat ranks among the top 15 in all male athletes at Nebraska.

Defenders have learned that their only hope of tackling him is hit him low. "It seems like tacklers are always shooting for my ankles or aiming for my knees," Alexander told the newspaper.

BRIEFLY NOTED

- Nebraska's game with Colorado will be the 10th to be televised this season. It's the fifth televised by ABC; the others televised by ABC were against Washington, Texas A&M, Texas and Kansas State.

- The only Cornhusker games not televised were those against Alabama-Birmingham and Iowa State.

- Nebraska has not lost more than one home game in a season since 1980, when the Cornhuskers lost to Florida State (18-14) and Oklahoma (21-17). Nebraska has not lost consecutive home games in a season since 1968, when the Cornhuskers lost three consecutive home games.

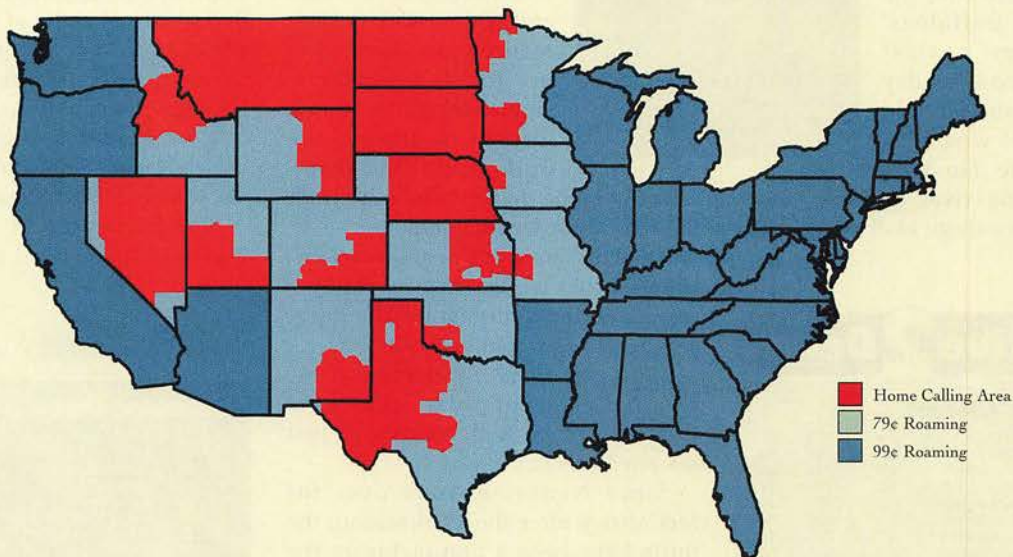
- Kansas began the streak (23-13), followed by Missouri (16-14) and Kansas State (12-0).

- The Kansas State game was played three weeks after the Missouri game.

- The Cornhuskers are 435-122-20 (.771) all-time in Lincoln, including 310-99-13 (.750) at Memorial Stadium, which opened in 1923. They are 68-3 at Memorial Stadium over the last 11 seasons, with one of the losses coming against Colorado (27-12 in 1990).

- Nebraska is 112-10 at home since 1980, with three of the six longest winning streaks in school history coming during that time: 19 from 1988 to 1990, 21 from 1981 to 1984 and 47 from 1991 to the Texas game this season. ■

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Rocky Mountain Sigh

Colorado head coach Rick Neuheisel on the hot seat as Buffaloes try to get back on track

By Mark DEROWITSCH

So much for the rivalry. When Bill McCartney coached at Colorado, he made the Buffaloes' annual game against Nebraska a red-letter day in his program. He told everyone who would listen that the Huskers were the Buffs' rival, and eventually got the entire college football world to believe him.

COLORADO

1998 Schedule/Results

S5	@ Colorado St. W, 42-14
S12	Fresno St. W, 29-21
S19	Utah St. W, 25-6
S26	Baylor W, 18-16
O3	at Oklahoma W, 27-25
O10	Kansas St. L, 16-9
O17	Texas Tech W, 19-17
O24	at Kansas L, 33-17
N7	at Missouri L, 38-14
N14	Iowa St. W, 35-8
N27	at Nebraska

Now look at it.

What was the annual Big 12 showdown between Nebraska and Colorado has been reduced to a mere tune-up for the Huskers' annual bowl bid. With a loss to Nebraska, the Buffs could find themselves at home during bowl season for the second consecutive season.

The Huskers face Colorado on Nov. 27 in Lincoln for the final regular season game for both teams. The game will be televised nationally by ABC.

Who's to blame for demise of the rivalry? The popular choice is Colorado coach Rick Neuheisel. Just ask any Buffs fan.

Since Neuheisel took over for McCartney after the 1994 season, the Buffs have been a non-factor on the national scene. This after Colorado spent the previous eight seasons as one of the elite programs in all the land.

And Neuheisel, a former quarterback at UCLA, looks forward to bringing Colorado back.

"I've always been one that has been motivated by big-time challenges, Neuheisel told the *Denver Post*. There were a lot of people who said I couldn't do it (as a player) and said they needed to get somebody else as I'm sure there are a lot of alums who are thinking that way right now. That's OK. Just watch me.

"I'm not down on this football team, but they need to be told the truth," he said. "They need to be told they aren't getting it."

It's not as bad as it seems in Boulder. After all, Colorado won six of its first nine games and split its first six games in Big 12 Conference play.

COLORADO
(7-3)

@

NEBRASKA
(8-3)



Mike MOSCHETTI



Lance BROWN

November 27, 1998 • 1:30 p.m. (CST)
Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Nebraska

However, after opening the season with five consecutive victories, the Buffaloes lost three of their next four games to fall out of contention for the national title and the Big 12 North Division championship.

Colorado's slide began with a home loss to Kansas State, but the Buffs then lost to Kansas and Missouri.

There's a good reason why Colorado hasn't lived up to its expect-

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE 6	Kenny Cheatham***	6-4	210	Sr.
-or- 3	Matt Davison*	6-0	180	So.
LT 69	Adam Julch**	6-5	315	Jr.
-or- 72	Ben Gessford*	6-2	290	Sr.
LG 63	James Sherman**	6-2	295	Jr.
54	Dominic Raiola	6-2	300	Fr.
C 59	Josh Heskew***	6-3	290	Sr.
54	Dominic Raiola	6-2	300	Fr.
RG 55	Russ Hochstein*	6-3	280	So.
63	James Sherman**	6-2	295	Jr.
RT 65	Jason Schwab*	6-1	300	Jr.
-or- 72	Ben Gessford*	6-2	290	Sr.
TE 88	Sheldon Jackson***	6-4	245	Sr.
87	Tracey Wistrom	6-4	215	Fr.
QB 7	Eric Crouch	6-0	200	Fr.
9	Monte Christo**	6-0	195	Sr.
FB 45	Joel Makovicka***	5-11	240	Sr.
15	Willie Miller*	6-0	230	So.
IB 38	Dan Alexander	6-0	250	So.
-or- 36	Correll Buckhalter*	6-0	225	So.
WB 5	Shevin Wiggins**	5-11	200	Sr.
-or- 14	Lance Brown***	5-11	190	Sr.
PK 35	Kris Brown***	5-10	205	Sr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR 57	Chad Kelsay***	6-3	250	Sr.
83	Kyle Vanden Bosch*	6-4	260	So.
NT 99	Jason Wiltz**	6-4	310	Sr.
96	Steve Warren**	6-1	305	Jr.
DT 91	Loran Kaiser*	6-5	280	So.
90	Jeremy Slechta	6-5	255	Fr.
RR 84	Mike Rucker***	6-6	250	Sr.
81	Aaron Willis	6-2	240	Jr.
SLB 37	Tony Ortiz	6-0	215	Jr.
-or- 46	Brian Shaw**	6-1	215	Jr.
MLB 44	Jay Foreman***	6-1	240	Sr.
13	Carlos Polk*	6-3	245	So.
WLB 1	Eric Johnson**	6-1	205	Sr.
50	Julius Jackson**	6-0	235	Jr.
LCB 16	Erwin Swiney*	6-0	185	So.
3	Keyuo Craver	6-0	180	Fr.
FS 19	Clint Finley*	5-11	200	So.
14	Dion Booker	6-1	205	Fr.
ROV 21	Mike Brown**	5-10	205	Jr.
25	Joe Walker*	5-10	200	So.
RCB 22	Ralph Brown**	5-9	180	Jr.
9	Khari Reynolds*	5-10	185	So.
P 23	Bill Lafleur**	5-11	200	Sr.

Tentative 2 Deeps

COLORADO DEFENSE

DE 13	Fred Jones	6-3	245	Jr.
80	Ian Loper	6-4	240	So.
DT 90	Aaron Marshall	6-4	280	Sr.
97	Justin Bannan	6-3	290	Fr.
DT 94	Sean Jarne	6-6	290	So.
98	Jesse Warren	6-4	275	Sr.
DE 82	Brady McDonnell	6-4	265	So.
30	Robert Haas	6-5	245	Fr.
WLB 8	Hannibal Navies	6-3	245	Sr.
48	Terrell Cade	6-4	235	Sr.
MLB 66	Brandon Southward	6-4	240	Sr.
35	Ty Gregorak	6-3	240	So.
SLB 21	Albus Brooks	6-0	205	Fr.
7	Jashon Sykes	6-3	220	Fr.
LCB 2	Damen Wheeler	5-10	175	Jr.
37	Marcus Washington	6-3	215	Sr.
SS 26	John Sanders	5-11	185	So.
31	Michael Lewis	6-2	195	So.
FS 3	Rashidi Barnes	6-0	195	Jr.
37	Marcus Washington	6-3	215	Sr.
RCB 1	Ben Kelly	5-10	185	So.
37	Marcus Washington	6-3	215	Sr.
P 47	Nick Pietsch	6-0	170	Jr.

COLORADO OFFENSE

WR 17	Robert Toler	6-0	200	Jr.
19	Javon Green	6-2	190	So.
WR 6	Darrin Chiaverini	6-2	210	Sr.
83	John Minardi	6-2	185	Fr.
LT 72	Shane Cook	6-7	305	Jr.
75	Erin Huizingh	6-8	280	Fr.
LG 70	Ben Nichols	6-6	300	Sr.
76	Brad Bedell	6-5	300	Jr.
C 53	Adam Reed	6-2	290	Sr.
60	David Herrick	6-3	285	So.
RG 71	Victor Rogers	6-7	310	Fr.
62	Chris Morgan	6-3	300	Jr.
RT 58	R. Johanningmeier	6-7	295	Jr.
71	Victor Rogers	6-7	310	Fr.
TE 87	Tom Ashworth	6-5	265	So.
88	Miles Koon	6-5	255	Fr.
WR 2	Marcus Stiggers	5-7	180	Jr.
5	Roman Hollowell	5-6	160	Fr.
QB 4	Mike Moschetti	6-0	195	Jr.
12	Adam Bledsoe	6-5	230	So.
TB 10	D. Cherrington	5-10	195	Jr.
27	Damion Barton	5-11	185	So.
K 9	Jeremy Aldrich	5-11	170	Jr.

tations this season. The Buffaloes have been decimated by injuries. During the first seven weeks of the season, a total of 15 players have missed at least one game. Of those 15 players, nine were starters who missed a combined total of 26 games.

Four players have started at tailback this season for Colorado, which is one of the reasons why the Buffaloes have the 101st ranked ground game in college football.

Ouch.

But the Buffs can still be a dangerous team. They have talent.

Colorado's offense is led by wide receiver Darrin Chiaverini, a 6-foot-2, 210-pound speedster who some football experts believe will be a first round NFL draft choice this spring. Chiaverini leads Colorado with 49 receptions for 581 yards and five touchdowns through the first nine games of the season. He gives Colorado a big-play threat every time he touches the ball.

He's not Colorado's only receiving threat, though. Sophomore Javon Green has made 31 receptions for 387 yards and has scored twice so far this season.



Marcus Stiggers is a lightning-fast receiver who can beat most defenders in man-to-man coverage.

The X-factor for the Buffaloes could be the diminutive Marcus Stiggers. The 5-foot-7 wideout is a burner who has the potential to beat any corner in man-to-man coverage. He has battled through injury problems this season, but Neuheisel loves him and could turn him loose at any given time. With Chiaverini, Green and Stiggers, the Buffaloes have a good 1-2-3 punch at the wideout position.

Colorado also has a talented passer at quarterback in Mike Moschetti, who won the starting job over Jeremy Weisinger and Adam Bledsoe during preseason drills last fall after spending time in the secondary during spring drills a year ago. Moschetti is an accurate passer, completing 142 of 246 passes, and has thrown for 1,806 yards and 12 touchdowns. He has been picked off just once per 41 attempts this season.

Where the Buffs have struggled offensively is on the ground. Junior

Dwayne Cherrington leads the team in rushing with only 31.3 yards per game. As a team, Colorado averages just 108.4 yards per contest.

Defensively, Colorado has improved. The Buffaloes give up an average of 313 yards per game, sixth best in the Big 12 Conference and 21st best in the country. Opponents are scoring an average of 20.7 points per game, 29th best in the country.

Colorado's pass defense is one of the best in the country. Marcus Washington, who has played both cornerback and free safety this season, is dependable in man-to-man coverage and has already intercepted two passes this season. Sophomore cornerback Ben Kelly also has picked off two passes to help anchor the Buffalo secondary.

Nebraska leads the all-time series, 40-14-2. Since 1968, Colorado has won just three times against the Cornhuskers, with the last victory coming in 1990, when Colorado won, 27-12, in Lincoln. ■

HI Predictions

Shawn Heilbron NU, 34-13

Comment: *Huskers finish strong at home.*

Steve Roe NU, 30-21

Comment: *Huskers won't lose two at home.*

RICK NEUHEISEL

VS

FRANK SOLICH

KEY MATCHUP

The losing coach of this game can expect a winter of discontent on campus.

Since Neuheisel took over for Bill McCartney, who led Colorado to the national championship in 1990, the Buffs have struggled. Last season, Colorado had a losing year for the first time since 1984. Forget the fact that Neuheisel's first two teams went 10-2. He's never beaten Nebraska and has yet to lead his team to a major bowl game.

This fall Solich replaced Nebraska legend Tom Osborne, who guided the Huskers to three national championships during his last four years at Nebraska. Solich's first year has been marred by injuries, particularly on offense, and losses to Texas A&M and Texas have ruined a solid debut season.

Both are excellent coaches, but Neuheisel is sitting squarely on the hot seat, and Solich just wants to win. ■

TALE OF THE APE

Who Has The Edge?

QUARTERBACKS

Mike Moschetti doesn't play like a defensive back. The JUCO transfer has shown maturity that the Buffs sorely needed this season. Eric Crouch has his chance to be the man, and now he must prove that he can be.



RUNNING BACKS

The Buffs' numbers don't lie. They can't run the ball. Rashaan Salaam, where are you? As for Nebraska, Dan Alexander is really stepping up. Look for him and Joel Makovicka to wear down the Colorado defense.



RECEIVERS

Colorado's Darrin Chiaverini is a threat to go deep on every play. Marcus Stiggers is another big-play threat. As for the Huskers, the quality players are there, but not like in Boulder.



OFFENSIVE LINE

The Huskers are much maligned, but still a decent group. Josh Heskew has been the anchor, and he wants to go out in style in his last regular season game. The chances are pretty good that he will.



DEFENSIVE LINE

Both teams can stop the run, but Nebraska has a little bit better pass rush. This is a pretty even matchup, but the edge goes to Nebraska because of experience and the home-field advantage.



LINEBACKERS

This area is usually Colorado's strength. Not this year. Hannibal Navies has been disappointing for the Buffs. The Huskers have been solid and should have a big game against Colorado.



SECONDARY

Colorado plays tight defense, led by Marcus Washington, the team's Mr. Everywhere. Sophomore Ben Kelly can go one-on-one with anybody. After a rough start, NU's Erwin Swiney is playing much better.



SPECIAL TEAMS

Joe Walker gives the Huskers an advantage with his excellent returns. Jeremy Aldrich is a great place-kicker, but Nick Pietsch leaves much to be desired in the punting department for the Buffs.



The goalpost at the north end of Kansas State's Wagner Field collapsed under the weight of 29 seasons of frustration — with an assist from a few destructive Wildcat fans.

They climbed the crossbar, even though it had been greased in anticipation of such a celebration, and rocked until it came down, much to the delight of many in attendance.

The backdrop included the popping of flashbulbs and a shower of tortillas, signifying Kansas State's goal of a return to the Fiesta Bowl and the Bowl Championship Series national title game.

"I'm so happy for those people tearing the goalpost down out there," Wildcat coach Bill Snyder said. "It means so much to them, for those people who stuck through it, through thick and thin."

The "it" to which Snyder referred was Kansas State's 40-30 victory against Nebraska, the Wildcats' first since 1968, when they came to Lincoln and spoiled Nebraska's Homecoming, 12-0.

"I'm happy. I can assure you of that," said Snyder. "I feel very good about this win. I'm humbled by it, in all honesty, because of how long it took."

Snyder meant the 29 seasons. But his statement could have applied to the game itself.

Kansas State didn't score the winning points until 5:25 remained, on an 11-yard touchdown pass from Michael Bishop to Darnell McDonald, capping a 10-play, 80-yard drive.

Nebraska didn't concede without a fight.

"I am tremendously proud of our football team and the effort they displayed out there today, and the character they displayed," said an emotional Cornhusker coach Frank Solich.

"I thought they played tremendously hard, and at times played tremendously well."

And if not for a poor third quarter, they might have played well enough to upset Kansas State, which went into the game tied with Tennessee for No. 1 in the ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll. The Wildcats were No. 2 in the Associated Press poll and No. 3 in the all-important BCS rankings.

Nebraska managed only 9 total yards during the third quarter after surprising the Wildcats by gaining 255 yards in the first half. Kansas State began the afternoon ranked second in the nation in total defense, allowing opponents an average of 219.7 yards per game and a nation-leading 7.7 points.

"We were pinned down pretty well in the third quarter and couldn't get out of it," Solich said. "Things just didn't fit very well for us in the early going in the third quarter."

The third quarter might have been a disaster had it not been for cornerback Ralph Brown, who scooped up a Frank Murphy fumble and returned the ball 74 yards for a touchdown and a tie at 24.

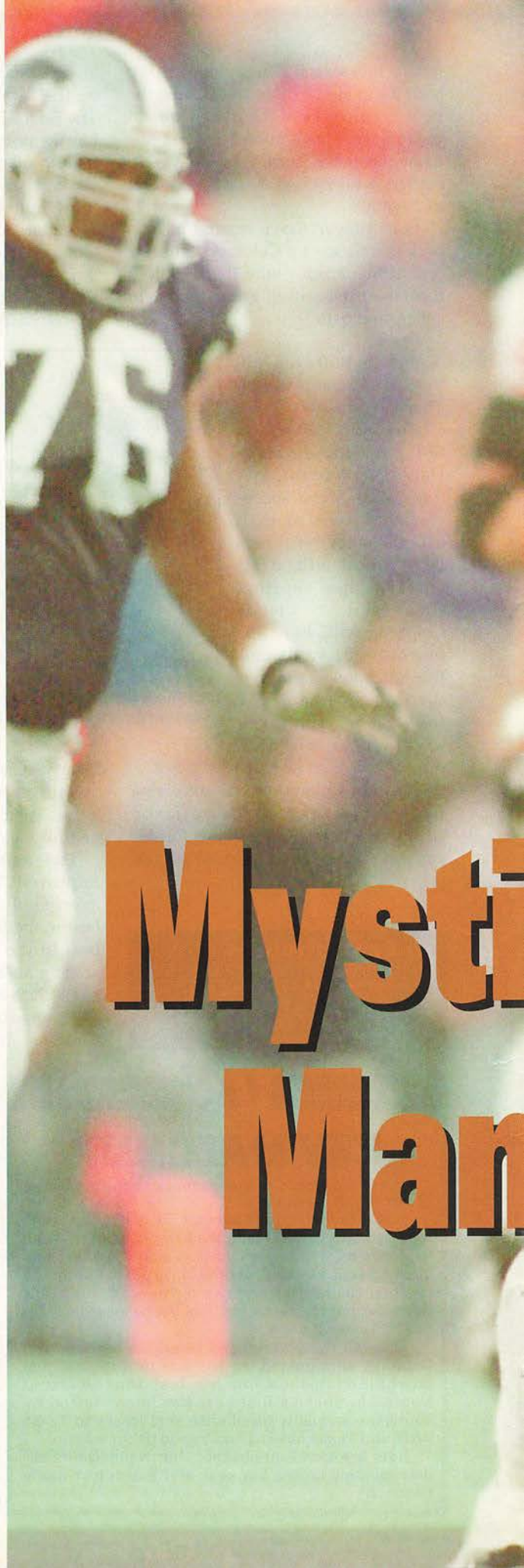
The fumble was Kansas State's sixth of the game and the fourth recovered by Nebraska.

Bishop lost the first three fumbles on consecutive possessions in the second quarter.

The Cornhuskers converted two of the fumbles into 10 points and a 17-14 halftime lead. They got the third to stop a Kansas State threat on a first-and-goal at the Nebraska 3-yard line.

Nebraska's Keyuo Craver, a true freshman cornerback, also intercepted a Bishop pass — only the Kansas State quarterback's second interception of the season — during the

Ralph Brown scampers 74 yards for a touchdown after recovering a fumble by Kansas State running back Frank Murphy.



All game photos by Scott Bruhn



**Cornhuskers' Incredible Effort Falls Just
Short As Kansas State Topples Nebraska
For The First Time Since 1968, 40-30
By Mike Babcock**

**fied In
hattan**

third quarter, giving the Cornhuskers five takeaways in the game.

But the turnovers weren't enough.

"We weren't able to stop them at key times in the game, and certainly that was costly," said Solich. "But on the other side of it, there were things we could have done better offensively, and certainly a few things in the kicking game we could have done better.

"I don't think you put the blame on anybody."

The Cornhuskers lost two fumbles and had one pass intercepted.

Kansas State middle linebacker Jeff Kelly was involved in all three Husker turnovers. First, he forced a fumble by I-back Dan Alexander near midfield early in the first quarter. He picked off

a pass one play after Craver picked off his. Kelly returned the second fumble 23 yards for the game's final touchdown with only three seconds remaining.

Bishop, without question, caused the most consternation for the Cornhuskers, however. The senior from Willis, Texas, shook off the frustration of the three lost fumbles, rushing for 140 yards and two touchdowns and completing 19 of 33 passes for 306 yards and two touchdowns.

"Bishop's a tremendous athlete. He made the plays when he had to make them," said Solich.

McDonald also caught the first touchdown pass, a 17-yarder with 8:20 left in the third quarter, and finished with 12 receptions for 183 yards.

Aaron Lockett caught six passes for 117 yards.

"It was very disappointing that we weren't able to match up with them," Nebraska defensive backs coach George Darlington said. "I don't think it was an exceptionally good game defensively.

"From my perspective, we didn't hold up our end of the bargain on defense."

Kansas State kept the Cornhuskers off balance by rushing for 206 yards, nearly twice as much as its best effort in the nine previous games against Nebraska under Snyder. The Wildcats rushed for 112 yards in a 38-31 loss against Nebraska at Lincoln in 1991. That also was the last game in which they had a lead.

"It's no easy task to slow their offense down," said Solich.

Cornhusker rush end and co-captain Chad Kelsay shared Darlington's opinion.

"When our offense puts up that many points, our defense should play well enough to win the game," he said.

Eric Crouch, Bishop's counterpart, provided Nebraska's offensive spark.

The redshirt freshman from Millard North, who was starting for a second consecutive game and fourth for the season, completed 10 of 21 passes for 139 yards and three touchdowns.

He also led the Cornhuskers in rushing, with 108 yards on 22 carries.

"We try to take what we can," said Crouch, who teamed with tight end Sheldon Jackson on touchdown passes of 8 and 9 yards and with split end Kenny Cheatham on a dramatic 45-yarder early in the second quarter for a 14-7 lead. Cheatham made the catch, one-handed, in the endzone.

"That just showed how important our passing game is," Crouch said.

The Cornhuskers started off as if they intended to do the same to Kansas State as they had done in the majority of the 29 consecutive victories, driving 80 yards on eight plays on their first possession to take a 7-0 lead.

"It's been a while since we've gone down and scored right away," said Crouch.

Kansas State responded by converting Alexander's fumble into a touchdown, however.

Nebraska regained the lead on Cheatham's athletic catch on a third-and-12 and increased it to 17-7 when Kris Brown kicked an 18-yard field goal with 4:55 remaining in the first half.

But Bishop rallied the Wildcats,

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directing a seven-play, 76-yard touchdown drive that included a 38-yard pass to McDonald. Bishop finished the drive with a touchdown from one yard out with 49 seconds remaining.

"Something we stress is, don't give them anything to take into the locker-room," Kelsay said.

Kansas State scored 10 points in the first 10 minutes of the second half to go ahead 24-17 before Brown's fumble return revitalized the Cornhuskers and set the stage for a dramatic finish.

After Crouch's third touchdown pass gave Nebraska a 30-27 lead, Kris Brown missed the extra-point kick to snap a streak of 125. With the previous extra-point kick, Brown had tied the NCAA career record. As a result of the miss, the Cornhuskers had no choice but to play for a touchdown.

"Crouch, I thought, gave a tremendous performance," Solich said. "I was really proud of his performance in a game like this, that was demanding a lot of attention around the country.

"He played tremendously composed. So my hat's off to him."

Nebraska began its next-to-last possession at its own 15-yard line with 5:25 remaining in the game. The Cornhuskers picked up one first down, when Crouch ran for 7 yards on a third-and-2 from the 23-yard line. But they could advance the ball only 2 yards on three plays.

On fourth-and-8 at his own 32-yard line, Crouch was sacked for a 12-yard loss.

By the time Nebraska got the ball back, only 15 seconds remained.

"It was just a war out there," said Crouch. "I knew it was going to be a back-and-forth game, all the time."

After Kelly returned Crouch's fumble for the final touchdown, the public address announcer indicated that the game was over, even though three seconds remained on the clock.

Wildcat fans surged onto the field to begin their celebration, and Kansas State was penalized 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct before attempting the extra point.

Bishop downed the ball, but the three seconds still remained because the clock doesn't run during an extra-point attempt. Again Wildcat fans began running onto the field toward the north goalpost.

Kansas State was charged with another 15-yard penalty before one last kickoff.

Then the celebration, 29 seasons in the making, began in earnest. ■

4TH & 1NCHES

More News From The Kansas State Game

- The Cornhuskers rushed for 212 yards, the most against Kansas State this season. The Wildcats went into the game ranked second in the nation in rushing defense, allowing an average of only 72.0 yards per game on the ground. They did not allow Nebraska a rushing touchdown, however.

They have allowed only one rushing touchdown the entire season.

Even so, "they were kind of soft up the middle," said Cornhusker tight end **Sheldon Jackson**.

The way to attack the Wildcats is to "run right at them," he said.

- When Nebraska drove 80 yards for a touchdown on the game's opening possession, it was the first time this season Kansas State has trailed. The Cornhuskers built up a 10-point lead in the second quarter.

- Kansas State quarterback **Michael Bishop** finished with 446 yards of total offense. It was the fourth time this season he has finished with 320 or more yards of total offense in a game.

By comparison, Nebraska's all-time record for total offense in a game is 319 yards.

"Michael's a great quarterback," Cornhusker quarterback **Eric Crouch** said.

Kansas State coach **Bill Snyder** was far from effusive in his praise of Bishop. "Mike played really well," said Snyder. "He was expected to, and he played extremely well.

"I was proud of him. He was motivated for this ballgame, and stayed tough. Sometimes, turnovers can rattle a player, but he handled it extremely well and played with confidence."

Cornhusker rush end **Chad Kelsay** noted that Bishop was frustrated by his second-quarter fumbles, "but that's the sign of a great team," and player. The fumbles weren't all that surprising, according to Kelsay. "He carries it (the ball) way out there, like a loaf of bread," Kelsay said.

- Nebraska I-back **Dan Alexander** carried only three times for 22 yards, losing his third carry on a fumble. He didn't return to action because of a knee injury, however, not the fumble.

If not for the knee injury, "you would have seen a lot of him," Solich said.

- Crouch was pulled down for a 12-yard loss on fourth-and-8 from the Nebraska 32-yard line on the Cornhuskers' next-to-last possession of the game. It appeared the tackler might have grabbed Crouch's facemask. Solich was asked if he thought that had been the case. "Yes," he said tersely.

"But apparently no one saw it that way."

- Prior to the game, Solich was asked if the Cornhuskers would need to play a perfect game in order to win against Kansas State. "It would sure help," he replied, eliciting laughter.

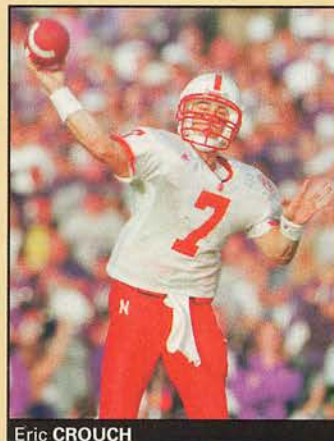
"Unless they're going to just turn the ball over to us and do some things that haven't been characteristic of them this year, we'll have to play great ball."

The Wildcats did some uncharacteristic things, including turning over the ball five times. "If we get five turnovers, we should win," said Cornhusker cornerback **Ralph Brown**.

But Nebraska didn't. So how good is Kansas State? "The telling tale is when you can overcome that many turnovers and win," said Cornhusker defensive backs coach **George Darlington**.

- ABC assigned its top crew to the regional telecast: Keith Jackson, Bob Griese and Lynn Swann.

Jackson had never worked a game in Manhattan prior to Saturday. ■



Eric CROUCH

1998 Schedule/Record (8-3)

Aug. 29	vs. Louisiana Tech	\$ W, 56-27
Sept. 5	Ala.-Birmingham	W, 38-7
Sept. 12	@ California	W, 24-3
Sept. 26	Washington	W, 55-7
Oct. 3	vs. Oklahoma St.&	W, 24-17
Oct. 10	@ Texas A&M	L, 28-21
Oct. 17	Kansas	W, 41-0
Oct. 24	Missouri	W, 20-13
Oct. 31	Texas	L, 20-16
Nov. 7	@ Iowa St.	W, 42-7
Nov. 14	@ Kansas St.	L, 40-30
Nov. 27	Colorado	1:30 p.m.

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BY THE NUMBERS

Kansas St. vs Nebraska
Nov. 14, 1998 • Manhattan, Kansas

Score By Quarters

Nebraska	7	10	7	6	—	30
Kansas St.	7	7	10	16	—	40

Team Stats

	NU	KSU
First Downs	18	27
Rushing	13	11
Passing	4	14
Penalty	1	2
Rushing Attempts	43	43
Yards Gained Rushing	236	233
Yards Lost Rushing	24	27
Net Yards Rushing	212	206
Net Yards Passing	139	306
Passes Attempted	21	33
Passes Completed	10	19
Had Intercepted	1	1
Total Plays	64	76
Total Net Yards	351	512
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.5	6.7
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	6-4
Penalties-Yards	5-34	8-83
Punts-Yards	6-277	2-71
Avg. Per Punt	46.2	35.5
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	4-105
Interceptions-Yards	1-0	1-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	1-74	1-23
Kickoff Returns-Yards	4-47	2-45
Possession Time	28:53	31:07



Matt Davison had two catches for 21 yards and threw some key blocks downfield.

Individual Leaders

NEBRASKA

RUSHING					
Name	Att	Yds	YPC	LNG	TD
Crouch, E.	22	108	4.9	20	0
Buckhalter, C.	13	54	4.2	18	0
Makovicka, J.	5	28	5.6	11	0
Alexander, D.	3	22	7.3	12	0

PASSING				
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	10-21-1	47.6	139	3

RECEIVING					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Jackson, S.	4	48	12.0	22	2
Davison, M.	2	21	10.5	12	0
Cheatham, K.	1	45	45.0	45	1
Wiggins, S.	1	28	28.0	28	0
Brown, L.	1	3	3.0	3	0
Buckhalter, C.	1	-6	-6.0	-6	0

FIELD GOALS			
Name	Att	Good	LNG
Brown, K.	1	1	18

PUNT RETURNS				
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG
none				

KICKOFF RETURNS					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Wiggins, S.	3	33	11.0	17	0
Walker, J.	1	14	14.0	14	0

DEFENSE							
Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks	
Brown, M.	7	1	8	1-2	0	0	0
Johnson, E.	6	1	7	1-2	0	0	0
Foreman, J.	5	1	6	0	0	0	0
Swiney, E.	4	2	6	0	0	0	0
Craver, K.	3	2	5	0	1-0	0	0
Kelsay, C.	4	0	4	1-1	0	0	0
Shaw, B.	4	0	4	0	0	0	0
Walker, J.	2	2	4	1-3	0	0	0
Brown, R.	3	0	3	1-3	0	0	0
Warren, S.	2	1	3	0	0	0	0
Ortiz, T.	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Wiltz, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Vanden Bosch, K.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Polk, C.	1	0	1	1-0	0	1-10	0
Jackson, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

KANSAS ST.

RUSHING					
Name	Att	Yds	YPC	LNG	TD
Bishop, M.	25	140	5.6	50	2
Hickson, E.	11	56	5.1	18	0
Goolsby, B.	1	5	5.0	5	0
Charles, M.	4	3	0.8	3	0
Murphy, F.	2	2	1.0	5	0

PASSING				
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Bishop, M.	19-33-1	57.6	306	2

RECEIVING					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
McDonald, D.	12	183	15.3	38	2
Lockett, A.	6	117	19.5	61	0
Goolsby, B.	1	6	6.0	6	0

FIELD GOALS			
Name	Att	Good	LNG
Gramatica, M.	2	2	25

PUNT RETURNS				
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG
Allen, D.	4	105	26.3	48

KICKOFF RETURNS				
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG
Murphy, F.	2	45	22.5	28

DEFENSE							
Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks	
Chapman, L.	6	5	11	0	0	0	0
Cooper, J.	5	3	8	0	0	0	0
Clements, J.	5	1	6	1-6	0	0	0
Simoneau, M.	3	3	6	1-6	0	0	0
McIntosh, D.	3	2	5	2-2	0	0	0
Ochs, T.	3	1	4	1-12	0	1-12	0
Carter, D.	3	1	4	0	0	0	0
Kelly, J.	2	2	4	1-2	1-0	1-2	0
Butler, J.	2	2	4	0	0	0	0
Howard, D.	1	2	3	2-10	0	2-10	0
Robinson, D.	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Beard, A.	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Rowe, A.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Littin, T.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Proctor, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0

'98 SEASON STATS

RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Buckhalter, C.	11	127	707	64.3	8
Makovicka, J.	11	92	437	39.7	2
Crouch, E.	7	79	441	63.0	5
Alexander, D.	9	70	369	41.0	4
Newcombe, B.	6	83	228	38.0	8
Christo, M.	7	59	223	31.9	3
Evans, D.	3	38	218	72.7	4
Miller, W.	10	19	96	9.6	2
Runtz, J.	4	3	59	14.8	0
Wiggins, S.	11	8	47	4.3	0
Legate, B.	9	6	28	3.1	1
White, D.	6	7	27	4.5	0
Brown, L.	5	1	13	2.6	0
Kingston, B.	2	3	9	4.5	0
Soucie, T.	6	1	7	1.2	0
Tillery, A.	1	1	3	3.0	0
Gragert, N.	1	1	3	3.0	0
Stanislav, J.	1	1	1	1.0	0
London, F.	7	1	-2	-0.3	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Newcombe, B.	6	50-79-1	63.3	712	1
Crouch, E.	7	39-79-3	49.4	478	4
Christo, M.	7	19-28-0	67.9	261	2

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Davison, M.	11	30	363	12.1	33.0	0
Wiggins, S.	11	19	301	15.8	27.4	1
Jackson, S.	11	18	332	18.4	30.2	4
Cheatham, K.	8	12	145	12.1	18.1	1
Buckhalter, C.	11	10	59	5.4	5.4	0
Haskie, B.	10	6	54	9.0	5.4	0
Makovicka, J.	11	4	67	16.8	6.1	0
Brown, L.	5	3	24	8.0	4.8	0
Evans, D.	3	3	23	7.7	7.7	0
Wistrom, T.	11	2	84	42.0	7.6	1
Debates, T.J.	9	1	16	16.0	1.8	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, K.	11	17	11	48

DEFENSE

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Brown, M.	11	34	53	87	5-6	1-1	0
Foreman, J.	11	29	53	82	6-23	0	2.5-18
Johnson, E.	11	31	34	65	10-43	0	5-31
Kelsay, C.	11	29	32	61	11-37	1-0	3.5-27
Swiney, E.	11	27	26	53	4-16	0	2-12
Walker, J.	11	21	23	44	5-10	3-65	0
Rucker, M.	10	17	26	43	7-9	0	0
Ortiz, T.	10	19	21	40	9-28	0	1-3
Brown, R.	11	23	15	38	2-3	2-60	0
Kaiser, L.	11	16	21	37	8-22	0	5.5-21
Shaw, B.	11	14	22	36	4-11	0	1-5
Wiltz, J.	9	9	21	30	1-7	2-32	1-7
Vanden Bosch, K.	11	10	17	27	4-36	0	2-29
Finley, C.	7	5	19	24	2-12	2-21	0
Warren, S.	9	9	15	24	1-3	0	0
Polk, C.	11	13	9	22	5-24	1-16	1-10
Craver, K.	10	9	11	20	0	1-0	0
Jackson, J.	9	7	10	17	3-20	0	2-19
Wills, A.	10	5	5	10	0	0	0
Kohl, J.	10	4	5	9	1-3	0	0
Reynolds, K.	6	5	3	8	1-5	0	0
Slechta, J.	10	5	3	8	0	0	0
Lohr, J.	7	2	6	8	2-7	0	5.3
Burrow, J.	10	2	2	4	0	0	0
Legate, B.	9	1	2	3	0	0	0
Watchorn, T.	9	1	2	3	0	0	0
McGraw, G.	9	1	2	3	0	0	0
Woodward, W.	9	1	1	2	0	0	0
Booker, D.	10	2	0	2	0	0	0
Vedral, M.	5	1	1	2	0	0	0
Ryan, E.	3	0	2	2	1-2	0	0
Wichmann, J.P.	3	1	1	2	0	0	0
Raymond, S.	3	2	0	2	0	0	0
McGinn, M.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Mehl, L.	1	0	1	1	1-3	0	0
Tuttle, C.	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Fischer, E.	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mooberry, B.	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Hogrefe, Q.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	4365	3518
Plays	785	748
Average Per Play	5.6	4.7
Average Per Game	396.8	319.8
Net Rushing Yards	2914	1290
Attempts	599	420
TDs Rushing	37	8
Net Passing Yards	1451	2228
Attempts	186	328
Completions	108	161
Average Per Pass	7.8	6.8
Average Per Catch	13.4	13.8
Average Per Game	131.9	202.5
TDs Passing	7	11
Sacks By-Yards	27-185	19-133
Fumbles-Lost	25-12	27-11
Penalties-Yards	56-492	96-752
Scoring		
1st	21	53
2nd	103	86
3rd	102	0
4th	0	367
Opponents	21	53

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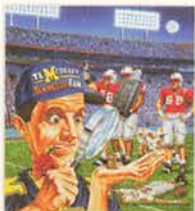
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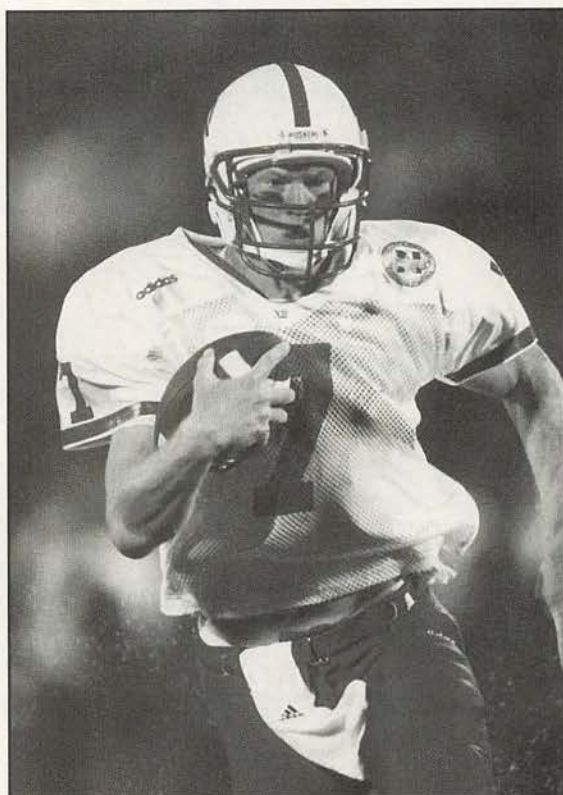
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NU's Top 10 QBs...

Scott FROST

He shouldered more than his share of blame during two seasons as Nebraska's starting quarterback and he didn't get the credit he deserved, especially in the Cornhuskers' national title run last season



Quarterbacks get too much of the blame when things go wrong for a football team and they get too much credit when things go right — except in the case of Scott Frost.

Without a doubt, Frost, who is now playing defensive back for the NFL's New York Jets, shouldered more than his share of blame during two seasons as Nebraska's starting quarterback.

But he probably didn't get as much credit as he deserved, particularly for his efforts — both on and off the field — in the Cornhuskers' national championship run last season.

He lobbied long and hard for Nebraska, and he "played great in big games," former coach Tom Osborne said after Frost directed a 54-15 victory against Texas A&M in the Big 12 play-off game. "Voters rank quarterbacks by raw stats versus productivity and winning football games.

"Scott has run this team well and played well this season."

The voters to whom Osborne referred were those responsible for leaving Frost off their first-team ballots for All-Big 12 quarterback. Frost was a second-team selection by the Associated Press and third-team according to the conference coaches, a slight that prompted ABC television commentator Brent Musburger to remark: "I can't believe he's the third-string quarterback in the Big 12."

Even the raw statistics indicated that Frost was deserving of first-team

recognition. He was only the 10th quarterback in NCAA Division I-A history to rush and pass for 1,000 or more yards in the same season, and his 19 rushing touchdowns were the second-most all-time by a quarterback.

He rushed for 1,095 yards — a record for a Nebraska quarterback — and passed for 1,237.

And, as Osborne pointed out, he performed at his best in the biggest games: against Washington, Kansas State, Missouri, Texas A&M and Tennessee in the Orange Bowl.

Frost's senior season was arguably the best in school history by a quarterback. Yet he was booed when he returned to the field late in the first half of the Central Florida game — at Memorial Stadium.

That despite the fact he earned a grade of 1.97 (on a 2.0 scale) for his play.

"I can never remember a quarterback here who went 60 snaps and graded any higher than that," Osborne said afterward. "We've had some who have graded 1.95 or so. And we've had some 2.0s if they went 20 plays. But I can never remember a player . . . having that many snaps and grading that well."

Those who booed were upset that

"I can't believe he's the third-string quarterback in the Big 12." ABC announcer Brent Musburger on Scott Frost

Frost was replacing sophomore Frankie London, who had come off the bench by predetermined plan and led the Cornhuskers to a touchdown. But there was more to it than that.

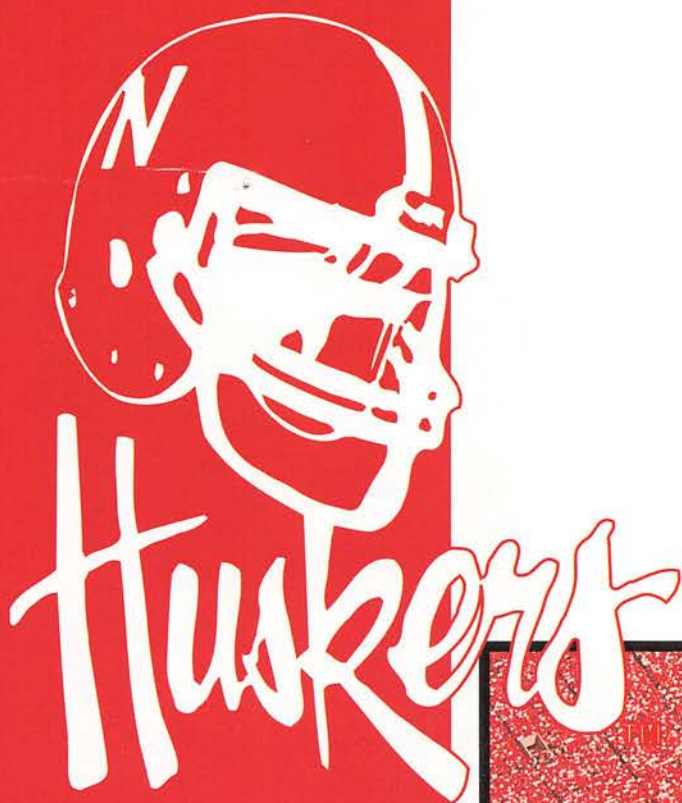
"I think there's a group of students — I think it's mostly students — who haven't liked me since I got here," Frost told reporters afterward. "I'm not sure why. There's nothing I did to them."

He did go to Stanford out of Wood River, Neb., High School to play for Bill Walsh before transferring to Nebraska for the second semester of his sophomore year. But that was hardly a capital crime.

"There are people who don't like everybody," Frost said, rising above the pettiness that produced the boos. "So I'm not going to let it bother me too much. Like I said, people do things like that, it gets me going, and I actually play better. Whatever it takes to motivate the players, I guess."

His claims to the contrary, the boos must have bothered him. It's only human nature.

There also were those who continued to blame him for the 19-0 upset loss at Arizona State in his second game at Nebraska in 1996 — the loss

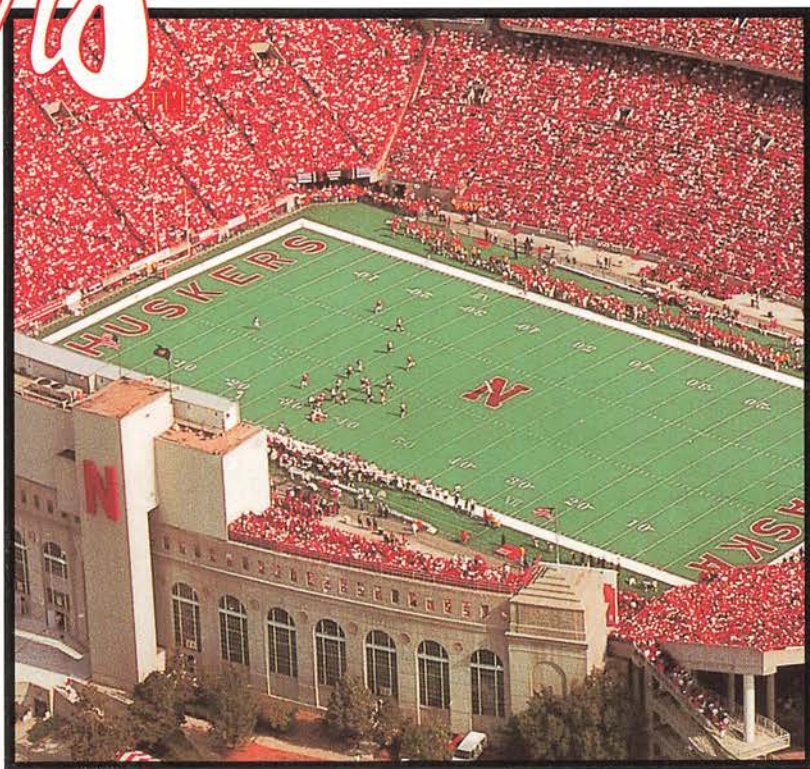


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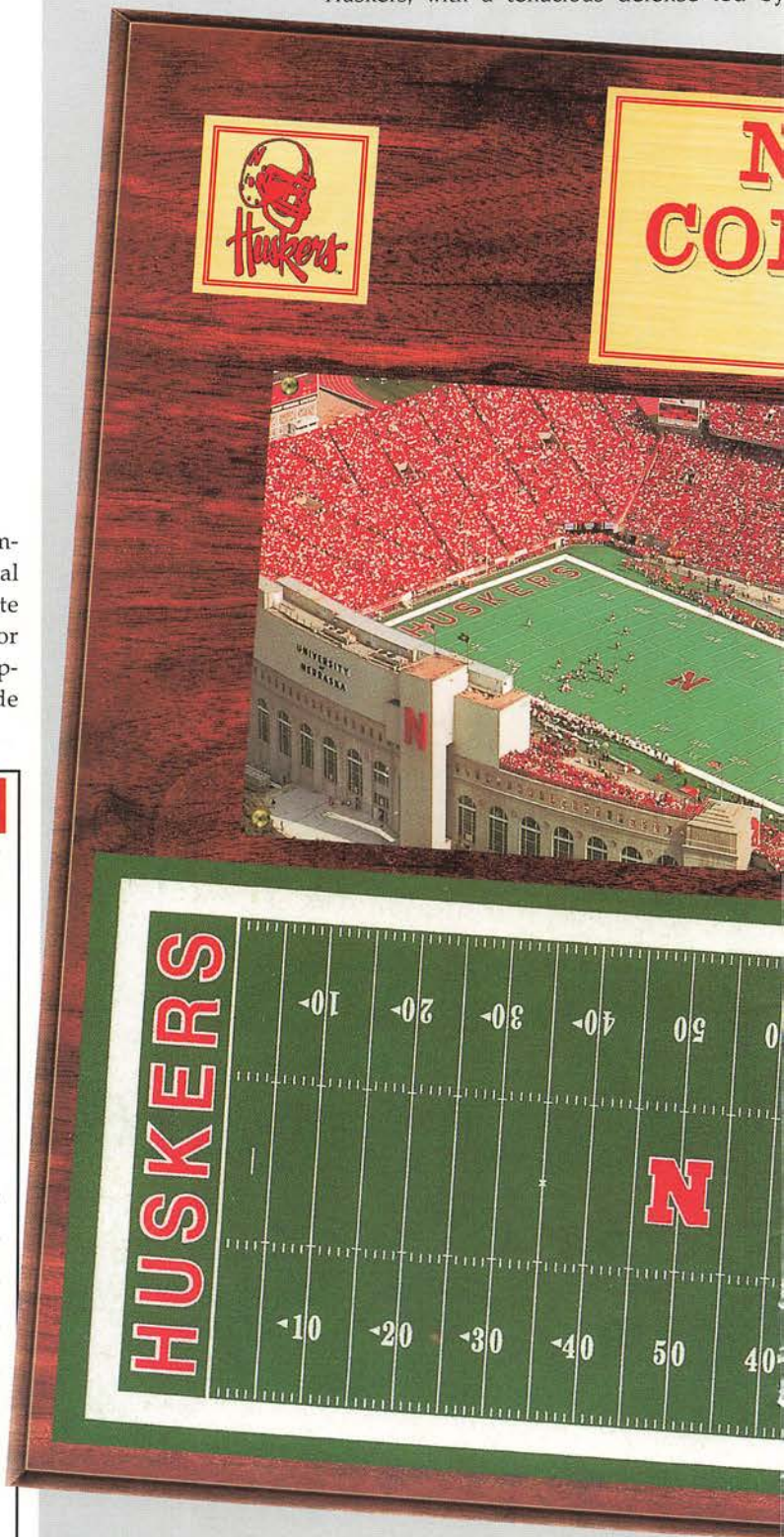
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Do you remember the 1994 game against Colorado, when the Huskers, with a tenacious defense led by



Christian Peter forced the Buffaloes into an 0 for 15 conversion rate on 3rd and 4th downs? In doing so, they handed Kordell Stewart and Rashaan Salaam a 24-7 defeat on their way to Tom Osborne's first National Championship.

Maybe it was that game back in 1959, against Oklahoma, when the Sooners were viewed as invincible in the conference. It had been 13 years since Oklahoma had lost a conference game! But the Huskers, in a preview of this great rivalry in later years, upset Bud Wilkinson's team and ended their streak.

Or perhaps it was that 1988 matchup between stellar offensive teams—Steve Taylor and Kenny

Clark for Nebraska against Barry Sanders and Oklahoma State. The Cowboys with the incomparable Sanders led the nation in scoring that year, averaging 47.5 points per game. But NU prevailed that day in Lincoln, 63-42.

Whatever your individual memories, you can capture the excitement and glory of Nebraska football in Memorial Stadium, with this special commemorative plaque. Available from Collegiate Sports Direct, this impressive 16x20 inch plaque features a large replica of the playing surface in Memorial Stadium, painted as it has been for football game day through the years. Above the replica playing field, is a stunning 5x10 inch photo by renowned Nebraska photographer Rick Anderson of game day at Memorial Stadium,

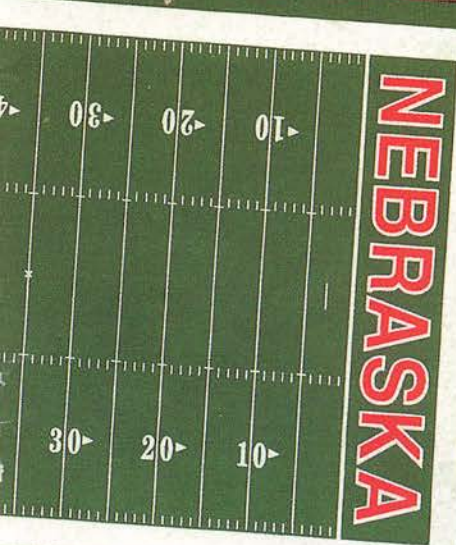
capturing the pageantry and excitement of the best football in the country, Nebraska Cornhusker football!! To the side, is a listing and narrative of some of the best games ever played at Memorial Stadium, to help re-ignite the memories. The games are listed in chronological order, so you and your friends can decide which amongst them were the best, the most thrilling, the most special.

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- Oct 2nd, 1937** Nebraska 14 Minnesota 9
In those days, they did not take the polls until later in the season. Minnesota was the defending National Champions and had dominated this series with a 15-1-2 record against NU. But this year, the Huskers used a spirited rally to win. Trailing 9-7 in the second half, and with starter Eldon McIlvray gone (and some feared perhaps dead with a skull fracture), Nebraska rallied behind QB Harris Andrews and his 25 yard TD pass to Bill Callahan for the win.
- Oct 31st, 1959** unranked Nebraska 25 #19 ranked Oklahoma 21
Oklahoma under Coach "Bud" Wilkinson was a power...74 straight conference wins, and 12 consecutive they came into Memorial Stadium and were stunned by the Cornhuskers. The game was not sealed until a late interception by Ron Meade of a Bobby Boyd pass in the NU end zone in the last minute. The celebration by students after the game was so exuberant, classes were canceled on Monday after the game so everyone could celebrate some more.
- Nov 23rd, 1963** #10 ranked Nebraska 29 #6 ranked Oklahoma 20
The Huskers went out to an early lead and dominated the Sooners in a game to decide who would go to the Orange Bowl. The Huskers, in their second year under Coach Bob Devaney, led 17-7 in the 4th quarter, then scored twice in a 1:32 span to put the game away 29-7. Oklahoma scored twice in the game's final two minutes to make the final score respectable. This team went on to beat Auburn in the Orange Bowl, and finish 5th in the final polls.
- Sept 17th, 1977** unranked Nebraska 31 #4 ranked Alabama 24
In a hard fought battle, Coach Tom Osborne won his first game against a Top Five team by defeating Coach "Bear" Bryant's Crimson Tide. With the game tied 24-24 in the 4th quarter, backup QB Randy Garcia replaced starter Tom Sorely and drove Nebraska 80 yards for the winning score. Rick Berns' 1 yard TD plunge capped the drive with 7:12 left in the game. But Alabama was not done, and twice drove back into Husker territory in the game's last 5 minutes. Both times Jeff Rutledge passes were intercepted by Jim Pilen to save the day. The Tide went unbeaten the rest of that season to finish #2 in the nation.
- Nov 11th, 1978** #4 ranked Nebraska 17 #1 ranked Oklahoma 14
It was a consummate showdown. Oklahoma coached by Barry Switzer was 9-0 and Nebraska under Tom Osborne was 8-1. Every year it seemed the game between these two was for the Orange Bowl bid, and often winning his first against OU. The Cornhuskers scored early on a 5-yard run in the 2nd quarter by Rick Berns (who finished with 113 yards on the day) and later in the 3rd stanza on an 8-yard run by L. M. Hipp. With the game tied 14-14 in the 4th quarter, Nebraska's Billy Todd hit a field goal to put them ahead, 17-14, with 11:51 left in the game. But Oklahoma came storming back, and twice drove deep into NU territory only to be stopped on Billy Sim fumbles (two of six Sooner turnovers on the day). His last fumble, with 3:27 remaining, was recovered by Jim Pilen on the Huskers three yard line to preserve the win.
- Oct 15th, 1988** #7 ranked Nebraska 63 #10 ranked Oklahoma State 42
This OSU team was led by the incomparable Barry Sanders, and entered this game with a 4-0 record and averaging over 50 points a game in their first 4 games. Nebraska was also potent, however, as they were 5-1 and second in the nation in scoring, averaging 45 points per game. The offensive heroes for NU were QB Steve Taylor, who ran for 3 TD's and passed for two more, and Tailback Ken Clark who rushed for 256 yards and 3 TD's. Nebraska broke out to a 28-0 1st quarter lead, which ballooned to 49-21 at the half. Sanders piled up 189 yards and 4 TD's for the Cowboys, who also scored on a Mike Gundy pass to Hart Lee Dykes.
- Oct 29th, 1994** #3 ranked Nebraska 24 #2 ranked Colorado 7
In a showdown game before 76,131, the Huskers stated their case convincingly with a win over the Buffaloes on their way to their third National Championship. Colorado entered the game ranked #2 and unbeaten at 7-0, and was led by a powerful offense which averaged 40 points a game behind the likes of Kordell Stewart at QB and Rashaan Salaam at RB. But on this day, the Husker defense carried the day, forcing Colorado to go 0 for 11 on third down attempts and 0 for 4 on fourth downs. QB Brook Beringer, replacing the sidelined Tommie Frazier, did a solid job leading the Husker offense. He completed 12 of 17 passes for 142 yards and guided the option well, along with Lawrence Phillips. Nebraska went on to finish the season 13-0 after clinching the title in the Orange Bowl with a 24-17 win over Miami.

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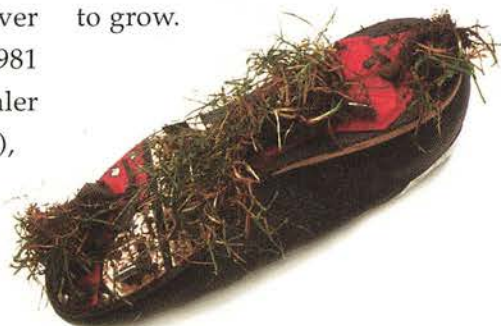
Memorial Stadium— constructed in 1923....has hosted an NCAA record 220 straight sellout games. It is the home of Nebraska Husker football. It has become synonymous with great skill players over the years, tough hitting by great defensive personnel. And some of the most wonderful football games the Midwest, indeed, the nation, have ever seen.

The first game was against Oklahoma on October 13th, 1923, and ended in a 24-0 Husker win. Since that time, the legend that is Nebraska football has been built over the years, as solidly as any part of the stadium itself. It has cheered 5 National Championship teams. It has witnessed the exploits of two Heisman trophy winners in Johnny Rodgers (1972) and Mike Rozier (1983). It has reveled in the performances of great linemen who have won an NCAA leading seven Outland Trophies—Larry Jacobson (1971), Rich Glover (1972), Dave Rimington (1981 and 1982), Dean Steinkuhler (1983), Will Shields (1992), and Zach Wiegert (1994). And that list doesn't even include exciting players who helped

mold the history of Husker football such as Tommie Frazier and I. M. Hipp.

That first stadium held 31,000 seats. The history of Nebraska football is reflected in the additions to the stadium. The success of Bob Devaney-coached teams led to many of the additions. In 1964, the south end zone section was installed, making the stadium a horseshoe, bringing capacity up to 48,000. In 1965, another 5,000 seats were added when the center portion of the north end zone was erected. Players such as Jerry Tagge, Rich Glover and Johnny Rodgers helped bring about the south end zone extension in 1972. Since then, there have been many changes, but little affecting total capacity, which today stands at 72,700.

Now new Coach Frank Solich accepts the challenge to add to the legends each year, and the saga of Husker football continues to grow.



snapped a school-record 26-game winning streak. "As I've said over and over, Scott didn't have a real good game at Arizona State," said Osborne.

"But you have to realize a lot of people around him didn't, either."

Osborne's point, though well-made, was overlooked by many fans, who later that season would place much of the blame for a 37-27 loss to Texas in the Big 12 championship game on him.

Frost was a lightning rod more when things went wrong than when they went right.

It wasn't until the week after the Central Florida game, and the boos, that he finally set aside the two seasons at Stanford and silenced his critics with an in-your-face performance at Washington.

He rushed for 97 yards and two touchdowns and completed 8-of-15 passes for 88 yards in leading the Cornhuskers to a decisive 27-14 victory against the No. 2 team in the AP poll.

Although Frost distinguished himself as a runner, he was an efficient passer, finishing seventh on Nebraska's career list, completing 192-of-359 for 2,677 yards and 18 touchdowns with only seven interceptions. He holds the school record for consecutive passes without an interception.

His nine-game streak of 155 began on Nov. 2, 1996 and continued until Oct. 4, 1997.

Statistically, his best performance was against Kansas in 1996, when he completed 12-of-16 for 254 yards and three touchdowns without an interception. But he was even more impressive in the final 1:02 of regulation in the Cornhuskers' 45-38 overtime victory at Missouri last season.

He directed the 10-play, 67-yard drive to a tying touchdown without the aid of timeouts. As a result, each of the 10 plays was a pass — five of them complete and two grounded.

The fifth was caught on a deflection by Matt Davison for the touchdown. Frost then ran 12 yards for the winning touchdown in the overtime. The touchdown was his fourth of the game.

His 316 yards of total offense — 141 rushing, 175 passing — rank second all-time at Nebraska. Jerry Tagge had 319 total offense yards in a 36-0 victory at Missouri in 1971. Frost also ranks second to Tagge on the Cornhuskers' single-season total offense list by only one yard.

10 QUESTIONS

Huskers Illustrated talks with defensive coordinator CHARLIE McBRIDE

1 What is your favorite movie and why?

My favorite actor is **Charles Bronson**, and my favorite movie is that one where he killed all those people... it was *Death Wish*.

2 Why Bronson?

I've always watched him since I was a kid when he started out in movies. He used to be a boxer at one time.

3 What's your favorite kind of music?

Blues. I started out listening to guys like **Muddy Waters**. In (his native) Chicago, we heard a lot of Blues music when we were kids.

4 What kind of music do you least like?

I don't know if there's any kind of music I don't like. I remember going to the symphony for the first time as a kid — our grammar school used to take us to the symphony a couple times a year — and I even liked that kind of music. I like anything. A lot of times it depends on the mood.

5 If you weren't coaching what would you be doing?

I've never even thought about it. I've never been out of athletics, so I don't know. But I think maybe I would have followed my father's footsteps as some kind of a salesman. Or maybe just a teacher. I always wanted to coach and teach.

6 What's the harshest example of fan backlash you can remember?

Probably the funniest one was when my son answered the phone one night after we lost to Colorado. Whoever was on the phone said they were a group of alumni from Indiana and said they wanted to buy out my contract. They said they'd pay a million dollars to buy it out. And my son told them, 'I don't think it will take that much.'

7 Why have you never become a head coach?

I've never wanted to be. I've always liked working with the players and I never felt I'd be comfortable not coaching on the field and being the defensive coach and calling the defenses. I've always liked the close relationships with the players. I've always set my own goal of making those kids as good as I can make them, to where I feel comfortable with it."

8 Who are the coaches you most try to emulate?

Frank Kush, who I really admire tremendously, really had an ability to get players to play. He did it in a completely different way than **Tom Osborne**. I also worked for **John Jardine**, and he had his own ways. I think the thing I learned from John was the necessity of being a great technique coach.

9 What did you take from your years with Osborne?

Of course, with Tom I learned a lot about being patient with the players and caring for the players more — patience was the big thing — and probably being more academically oriented with the players.

10 How many times have you been offered jobs in the NFL?

I've had a chance to go in the NFL as many as 15 to 18 times. I've been offered jobs and asked if I'm interested in jobs. But I enjoy Lincoln and I enjoy Nebraska. I like what it stands for. We were successful here and my kids were happy here. I didn't want to take my kids out of high school and move them around. I wanted them to have a home. Plus, I'm a loyal person. And everything looks greener on the other side when you think about it. ■



Charlie McBRIDE

Tagge finished the 1971 national championship season with 2,333 yards.

Even though he played only two seasons at Nebraska, Frost is seventh in career total offense (4,210 yards), seventh in career passing yardage (2,577) and 25th in career rushing (1,533 yards).

He averaged 5.08 yards per carry

during those two seasons.

"He's doing as many things well as anyone we've had," Osborne said early last season. "He just isn't evaluated on the same parameters most people evaluate a quarterback on.

"That's why I don't know how he'll end up on the 'all-teams.'

"But for our purposes, he's very good."

If Mike Brown had his druthers, and a little more size, he'd be playing linebacker. His dream is to play a defensive position "where you're involved in everything, you're involved with those big guys and it seems like you're always having contact with someone," he said.

Without question, the junior from Scottsdale, Ariz., has the heart of a linebacker.

But at 5-foot-10 and 205 pounds, he's a little small for the position. "God blessed me with a short, small body," said Brown. "So I just have to play the position I'm supposed to play."

The position he's supposed to play is rover or free safety — and when he was a freshman, cornerback. He's pretty much played everywhere in the secondary at one time or another.

"The coaches know I'm prepared to play anywhere they want me to play, so if they feel I need to be at free safety for some plays or strong safety for some plays, it doesn't matter," he said.

Brown started every game at rover last season, but he was moved to free safety at the beginning of this season while sophomore Clint Finley recovered from a severely strained left knee.

Brown's unique understanding of the defense enabled him to make the position switch with a minimal disruption in the secondary. Even so, "early in the season it took me a while to really get comfortable at free safety," he said. "But right now, I'm pretty comfortable at both positions."


While he was playing free safety, sophomore Joe Walker, his backup, as well as the No. 1 nickel back, became the starting rover. With Finley's return, the three rotate at the three positions.

The secondary benefits, and "each of us is cool with that," Brown said.

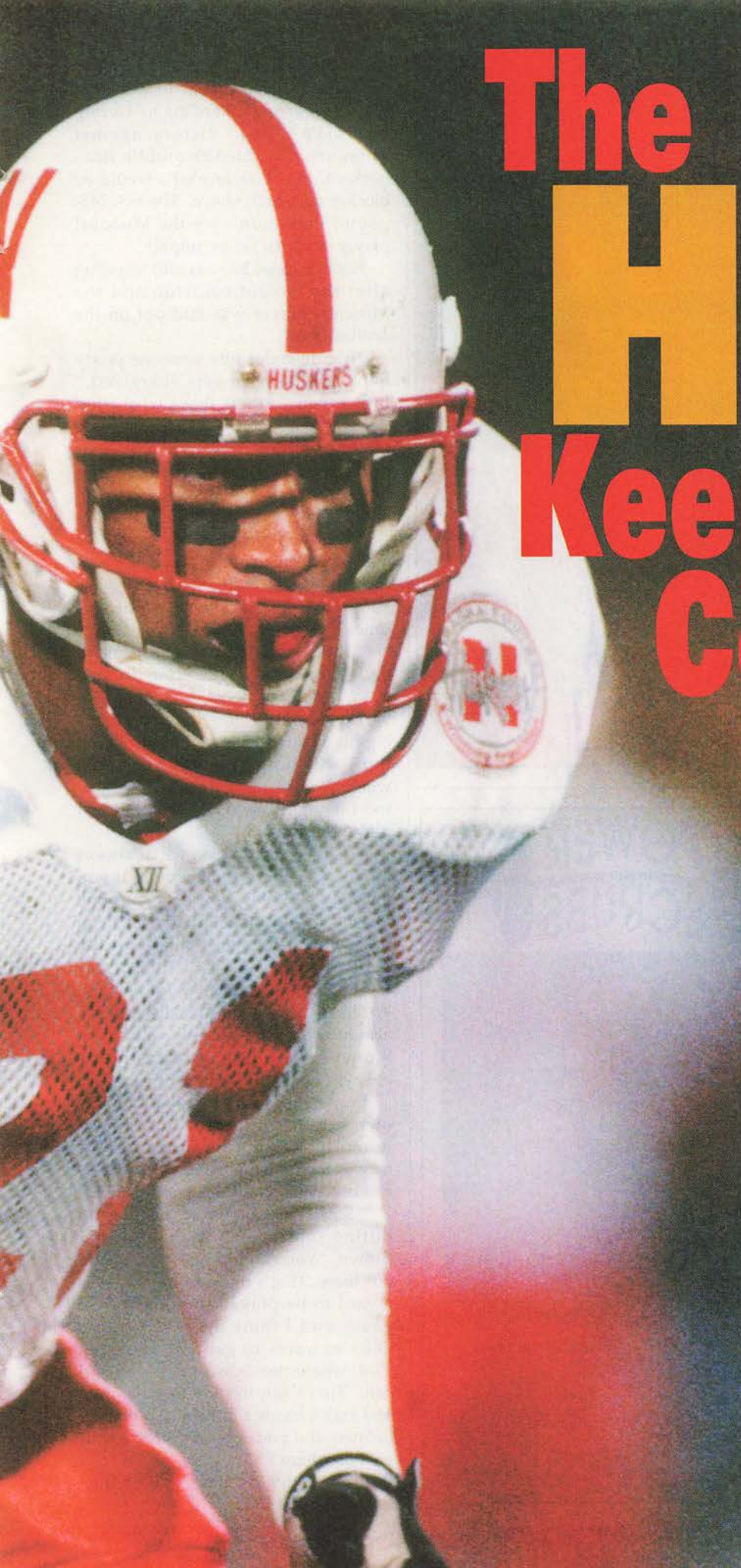
"We understand we need to have some fresh guys in there, bring a guy who's tired off the field and get a fresh guy in there, one who's going to play better just because he's more rested."

Brown is among the Cornhuskers' surest tacklers, and he has ranked second on the team to senior middle linebacker Jay Foreman in total tackles throughout most of the season.

Even though Finley has a well-deserved reputation for making big



Mike Brown and the Blackshirts concentrate on making sure tackles on every play, but when the opportunity presents itself, these guys like to crack opponents as hard as possible



The Hits Keep On Coming

hits, Brown can also sting a ball carrier when the circumstances are right.

"You have to know when you have to make a sure tackle and when you have an opportunity to really try to lay a hit on somebody," said Brown.

"That's just football knowledge. You have to understand that not every tackle is going to be a big hit. Sometimes in the secondary, you're the last line of defense, and you have to get the guy any way you can."

Big hits are less common in the open field in one-on-one confrontations. That's "one of the hardest things to do," Brown said. "There's a lot of space for the guy with the ball to go."

"There's more chance for a big hit if there are a lot of guys around. If someone has his arms around someone (the ball carrier), you can really try to come up and go after the ball, put your helmet on the ball and cause a fumble. You're always going hard, but I think that's definitely easier."

"You're not really out of control, but you take it to another level, where if you miss, you know it's not going to be a big deal. So you just go in there with some kind of reckless abandon."

"Then there are the other situations where you know, I'm really going to have to concentrate, break down and make a sure-handed tackle, make sure

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the guy goes down."

Occasionally, someone makes a big hit without really intending to. During Nebraska's 20-13 victory against Missouri, Cornhusker middle line-backer Carlos Polk leveled a would-be blocker on a kick return. The 6-3, 245-pound Polk didn't see the Missouri player until just before impact.

Nevertheless, he was still standing after the violent collision and the Missouri player was laid out on the artificial turf.

"If a defender hits someone pretty hard, the defense gets energized," Brown said. "I think that's what good defenses really thrive on, getting some big hits, shutting down the offense. If you can do that, the defense just builds off of it. It seems like a big ball of energy.

"Everybody feeds off of it, and it's just uncontrollable."

Senior rush end Chad Kelsay has energized the Blackshirts numerous times this season.

"Chad, week after week, seems to be laying these tremendous hits on guys," said Brown.

There is little time to appreciate a big hit when it occurs. That must wait until watching videotape the next week. During the game, "you're just too busy getting ready for the next play," Brown said.

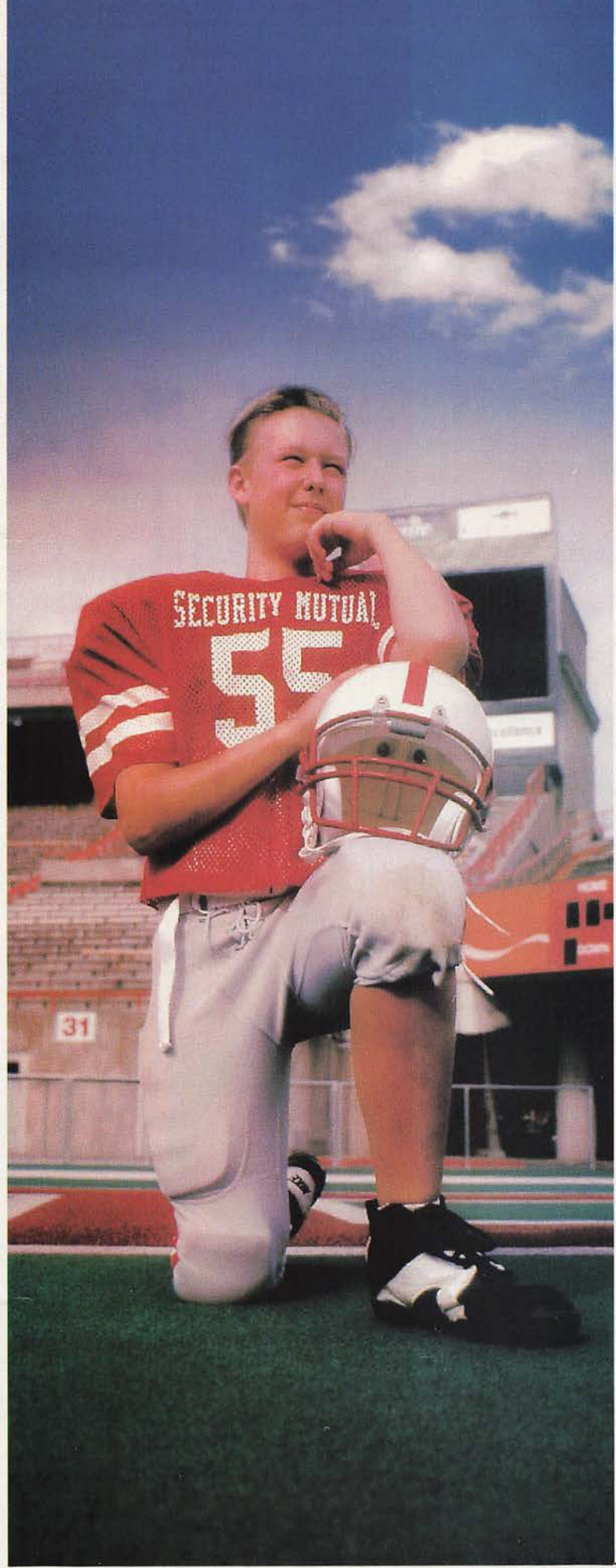
"As defensive backs, we're always taught that every play counts. If you make a good play, you have to forget it. And if you make a bad play, you have to forget about it and get ready for the next play.

"Our defense takes pride in that. We like to make sure tackles, but we also like to hit people. We want to be known as a physical team that is always going to hit you pretty good."

Brown takes delight not only in his own big hits but also those of his teammates. That's one of the reasons he was happy when Finley was able to return to action after his knee healed.

"Somehow, some way, he ends up hitting someone really hard," said Brown. "You can tell he's having fun out there. That's the way football was meant to be played. It's a physical game, and I think everyone on the defense wants to get that one good shot, where the crowd goes 'ooh and aah.' That's fun to play to the crowd and knock heads a little bit. You've got helmets and pads on, so you might as well use them."

Brown doesn't have to be a line-backer for that. ■



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Quint Hogrefe respectfully declined the interview request, even though it would have been fun. He was an anonymous freshman walkon, and answering a reporter's questions would have been something to do while he waited for the team bus to leave the 1995 Orange Bowl media day activities.

Actually, he didn't exactly decline the request. He set the reporter straight.

"It's funny," Hogrefe said recently, recalling the experience with a laugh. "A guy comes up to me and says: 'You got a minute Mr. Schlesinger?' And I was like, 'You've got the wrong guy.'"

Hogrefe, a Nebraska redshirt, wore a No. 40 jersey, as did senior fullback Cory Schlesinger. So the reporter had made an honest mistake.

"It was kind of flattering," said Hogrefe. "I thought about spouting off."

But he thought better of it.

"I don't think T.O. would have liked it," he said.

"T.O.," of course, was former Nebraska coach Tom Osborne.

Hogrefe isn't one to spout off, any-

A Case Of Senioritis

Quint Hogrefe lived the dream, playing at Nebraska as a walkon. But after five years, even he is ready to move on
By Mike Babcock

way, even in the guise of someone else. Still, the experience is among the fond memories he'll take with him when he leaves Nebraska after the bowl game.

He'll graduate in December with a degree in accounting and a near-perfect cumulative grade-point average, and he'll begin an internship at an Omaha accounting firm in January.

The tunnel walk before the

Colorado game will be his last.

"It will be nice to go out one more time. But now I'm ready to move on to something else, outside college, outside of football," Hogrefe said. "I'll miss it. But five years is plenty."

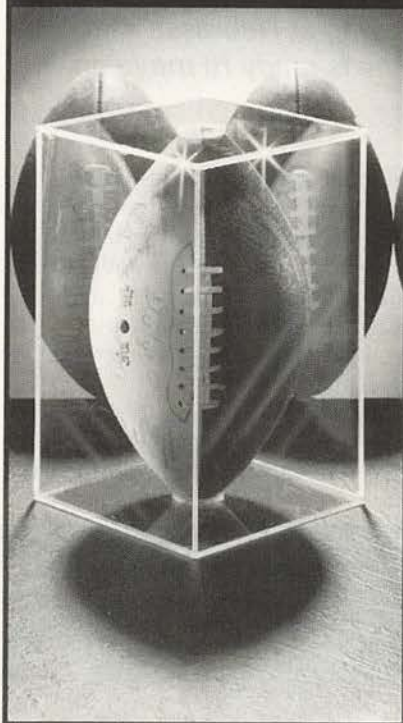
"I'm excited about having some free time, too."

Hogrefe is among 19 Nebraska seniors who will be suiting up for the final time at Memorial Stadium. And



Senior Quint Hogrefe (49) has seen limited playing time during his career at Nebraska, but he has no regrets about coming to Lincoln.

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he is among nine who walked on — about half of the total walkons in 1994.

"There were 18 or 20 of us, if not more who walked on," he said.

There also were 21 scholarship recruits in 1994, including nine who have since dropped out or transferred. During his five seasons, he's seen plenty of players come and go.

"It kind of puts everything in perspective," said Hogrefe. "You read the recruits' bios and you kind of learn: Well, we'll wait and see. I'm kind of proud of the fact that I've stuck it out.

"There have been a ton of guys who didn't make the cut, transferred or whatever."

He never really came close to leaving after his first day of practice as a freshman.

The NCAA began limiting the number of players who could report for preseason practice in 1994, which meant his first practice was on the first day of classes at the university. He arrived with a lot of enthusiasm and little understanding of what he was getting himself into.

"I remember walking in and seeing guys like Larry Townsend sitting there with arms about the size of my legs, and thinking, 'Man, what am I doing here?'" Hogrefe said.

What he was doing was preparing to become a linebacker, even though his preference would have been running back. He rushed for more than 3,000 yards during his career at Auburn, Neb., High School, where he was a teammate of Cornhusker rush end Chad Kelsay, another of the 19 seniors.

"He was a really good high school running back," said Kelsay. "He probably could have gone to a lot of places on scholarship. I'm sure it's been hard for him. He's such a competitor.

"But he stuck the whole thing out. It's been fun playing with Quint here."

Hogrefe had several football scholarship offers from non-Division I-A schools, most of which, including the University of Nebraska-Omaha, were interested in him as a running back.

Had he not walked on at Nebraska, he probably would have gone to UNO.

After learning that he would receive a Regents academic scholarship — he had a perfect 4.0 grade-point average in high school — he immediately settled on walking on at Nebraska.

"I thought I might as well not have any second thoughts later on," he said.

If not for the Regents scholarship,

however, "I might be in Omaha now."

And playing running back for the Mavericks.

"To this day, I think that might be my stronger side," Hogrefe said. "But when you come here, you just fit wherever you can. I started out as a line-backer. I've played all three.

"Just kind of wherever they've needed me, I've played."

He ended up at strongside line-backer, where he has backed up juniors Brian Shaw and Tony Ortiz and seen only limited action this season, though he will, however, earn a fourth letter.

"Obviously, I've been disappointed," said Hogrefe, who also has three national championship rings. "At the same time, I've kind of accepted my role here. It's been kind of a weird situation.

"In 1995, when we had that outstanding team and ran the table, I actually played more than I have since. We just ran through a lot of teams that year, so I got a lot of playing time. That was exciting. This year there have been a lot of close games and I haven't seen the field as much as I hoped I would."

Hogrefe even got to play near the end of the 62-24 victory against Florida in the Fiesta Bowl.

"I'm part of history I like to say. I was on that kickoff the guy returned for a touchdown," he said.

"I think it was the longest in Fiesta Bowl history or something."

Reidel Anthony returned a kickoff 93 yards for the game's final touchdown.

"I like to say I was clipped," Hogrefe said. Otherwise, he might have made the tackle.

He and split end Billy Haafke, another senior who walked on from South Sioux City, Neb., High School, were talking recently about everything they have been through in five years at Nebraska. They agreed "if we had to start all over as freshmen now, there's no way we could do it," said Hogrefe.

That's not true. They could do it again, though Hogrefe might try playing offense instead.

"You have second thoughts, I guess," he said. "I don't have any second thoughts about coming to Nebraska. If anything, I would have maybe tried the other side of the ball, given it a shot."

He was, after all, mistaken for a fullback at the Orange Bowl media day.

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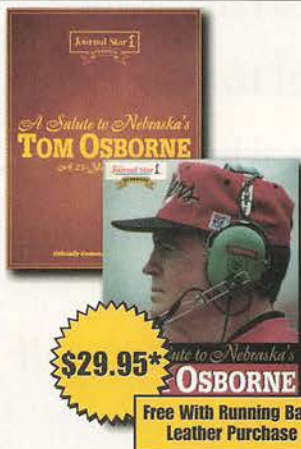


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PLAYER PROFILE

Andy Markowski

Reflecting the best aspects of Danny Nee's program, the fifth-year senior has become a leader rather than the follower he was as a freshman

THE VALUE OF leadership was dramatically illustrated in the Nebraska football team's national championship run last season, when seniors Grant Wistrom and Jason Peter drove the Cornhuskers to succeed. Nebraska achieved perfection through a combination of ability and will.

Leadership is important in the success of any team. But theirs was extraordinary.

The Cornhusker basketball team has such a leader this season in senior Andy Markowski.

The 6-foot-8, 215-pound power forward from Ord, Neb., "has really shown his five years in the program," coach Danny Nee said the first week of practice. "He's really blossomed."

"Andy has been a very pleasant surprise just in the first few days of practice with his leadership, his attitude, his work ethic. He's a very verbal leader. He's pulled the team to a higher level."

Point guard Tyrone Lue assumed that responsibility last season. He was the "on-court leader," said Markowski, a team captain. But Lue has departed for the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers.

"So look for me to be a little more vocal," Markowski said.

"I'm trying to be the glue that holds this whole thing together."

As Nee indicated, this is Markowski's fifth season at Nebraska. He redshirted as a freshman in 1994-95. Since then, he has developed a reputation for his constant hard work and determination.

"Our fifth-year players have really been a charm for us," Nee said, comparing Markowski to such former Cornhuskers as Bruce Chubick, Eric Piatkowski and Beau Reid. Chubick, in particular, set a standard for com-

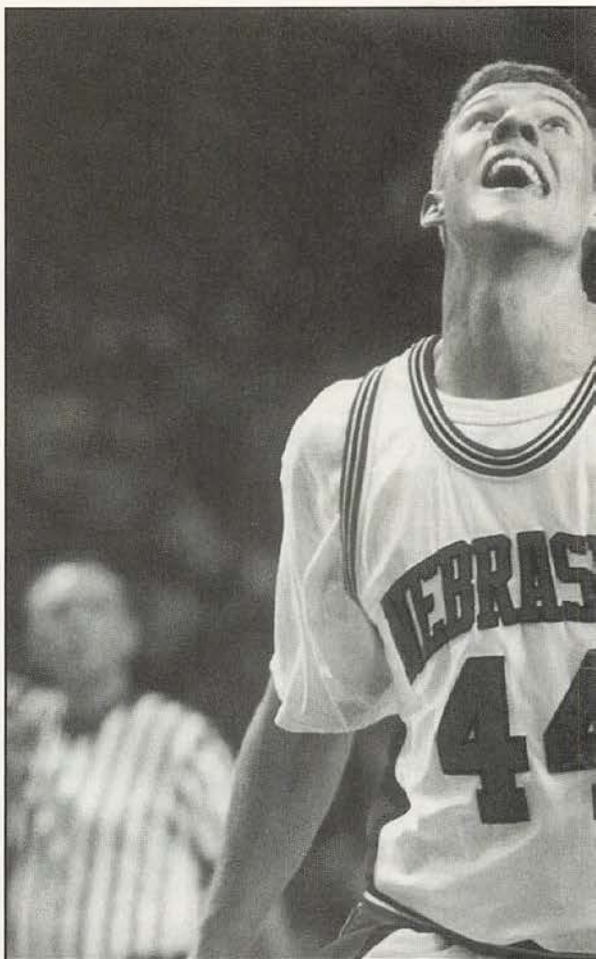
mitment — and demanding the same from others.

Chubick got the maximum out of his ability. And so has Markowski.

He started 26 games last season, averaging 6.6 points and 6.6 rebounds. He was second on the team to center Venson Hamilton in rebounding, and he was fourth in minutes played, averaging 28.4 minutes per game.

Markowski had 16 blocked shots and 44 steals, and he shot 46.4 percent from the field. The only area in which

Markowski set an example during the off-season and was among the team leaders in fall strength and conditioning tests.



he was deficient, and markedly so, was free-throw shooting. He made only 39 percent.

(He hit 63 percent from the free-throw line as a redshirt freshman.)

Even though Lue, an All-Big 12 performer, is gone, "we've got the potential to be better than last year, if we stick together as a team," Markowski said. "I mean we've got to have everybody on the same page just because we don't have that single player who can carry us. On different nights, it's going to be different players. But we have the talent to be very good. We're deeper than we were last year.

"We're more experienced than we were last year. I'm silently more excited." Silently?

"Wherever there's a weak area, we're strong in other areas," he said.

He and Hamilton give the Cornhuskers strong rebounding, and "I'm going to step it up a little this

year," Markowski said. "It's time for me to score more, look for my shot a little more.

"But you're going to see the same player. I'm going to rebound. I'm going to play defense. I'm going to give people shots off of my screens. That part isn't going to change."

Markowski has changed during his time at Nebraska, however. He's become a leader rather than the follower he was as a freshman, when he participated in a much-publicized team walk-out.

"Once that was over, I figured out how wrong it was," he told *Omaha World-Herald* columnist Tom Shatel recently. "I was the first one to march into Coach Nee's office and apologize. Standing in Bill Byrne's office, I had nothing to say. I didn't know what I was doing there.

"I thought at the time that was senior leadership. Now I know that it wasn't.

"I wish I didn't even have my name associated with that deal."

That's in the past. The Cornhuskers have won an NIT championship and returned to the NCAA Tournament since then. Markowski has matured and earned the respect of those around him for his success in the classroom as well as his tough-minded play. He's a two-time Academic All-Big 12 honoree, with a 3.397 cumulative grade-point average as an education major.

Markowski is scheduled to receive his degree in December. He'll play the conference season as a graduate student, working toward a master's degree in educational administration.

He reflects the best aspects of Nee's program. And this is his team.

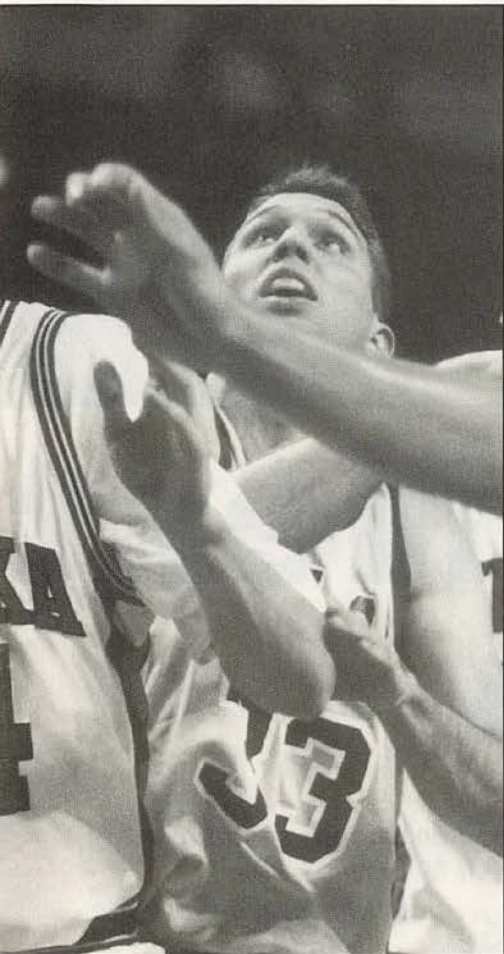
Markowski set an example during the off-season and was among the team leaders in fall strength and conditioning tests — he was third on the team in the 10-yard dash (1.73 seconds) and fifth in vertical jump (31.5 inches). But his value to Nee's 13th team can't be measured statistically.

"Right now, Andy Markowski is pretty much going to be a leader for the year," sophomore forward Chad Johnson said.

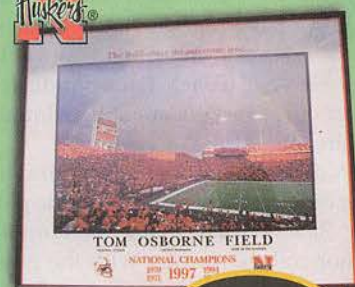
"But the whole team is trying to pull together and be one big team without just one leader." ■

"I'm trying to be the glue that holds this whole thing together. We're more experienced than we were last year. I'm silently more excited."

Andy Markowski



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A 23-win season in 1997-98 for the Nebraska women's basketball program matched the best season in school history, but second-year Coach Paul Sanderford insists the Huskers are still swimming upstream.

Nebraska returns eight players, five of whom started at least one game for Sanderford, who welcomes a junior-college transfer with the potential to make a big impact, a former volleyball All-American and a solid freshman class. It's a nucleus that has hopes as high as ever for an outstanding Husker season.

"We talk about using last year as a stepping stone to building a foundation and getting to the next level," Sanderford said. "For me, the next level is being a top 10 program, or being able to compete consistently with the best teams in the country. We were not there yet last year, but that is where we are going."

The Huskers, who reached the second round of the NCAA Tournament, equaled the school records for wins in a season and regular-season wins and spent a school-record 17 weeks in the national rankings last season.

The Huskers also tied a school record with 11 conference victories and set a school record for single-season home wins, going a perfect 16-0 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Sanderford, however, hopes the Lincoln-area billboards promoting his team as "Unbeaten at Devaney" will still be standing after the first week of the regular season. Nebraska kicked off its year in the CableVision Classic, where Arizona was expected to clash with the Huskers in the final.

The Wildcats reached the Sweet 16 last season and finished the year ranked No. 9. It's the first of several tests Sanderford has scheduled for Nebraska. The Huskers could play as many as 14 of their 29 regular-season games against teams that advanced to the 1998 NCAA Tournament.

"Our non-conference schedule is probably a little over-ambitious," Sanderford said. "We are going to be playing NCAA Tournament-quality competition nearly every game, but I think that is really going to help us when the Big 12 Conference season and postseason roll around."

Nebraska finished third in the Big 12 last season, going 11-5 before losing to Oklahoma State in the quarterfinals of the postseason conference tournament. This year the Huskers are



The Next Step

After leading the Cornhusker's women's hoops squad to a 23-win season a year ago — his first at Nebraska — Paul Sanderford has his eyes on a bigger prize this season, despite the loss of All-American Anna DeForge • By Todd Henrichs

picked fifth in a conference coaches say could send six teams to the NCAA Tournament.

To be among that group, Nebraska must continue its solid work on the boards and replace the scoring load lost with the graduation of honorable mention All-American Anna DeForge.

Last season Nebraska led the Big 12 and finished eighth nationally in rebounding margin. Not only did DeForge lead the Huskers' offensive attack with 18.5 points per game, she led Nebraska on the boards, grabbing 7.9 rebounds per game.

"It is going to be hard to replace Anna," Sanderford said. "The thing you have to look at with Anna is not necessarily her points or rebounds a game, but her demeanor on the floor. She had the ability to pick the team up with big plays and her knowledge of the game."

No one player will be asked to fill DeForge's shoes this season. Instead, Sanderford is looking to his seniors for leadership and to a junior class for more output offensively.

Junior guard Nicole Kubik of Cambridge, Neb., however, could be the biggest key for the Huskers. A question mark at the beginning of the year,



While it is impossible to replace the production of departed All-American Anna DeForge (left) with just one player, the Cornhusker women's basketball team will look to players such as junior point guard Nicole Kubik for scoring.



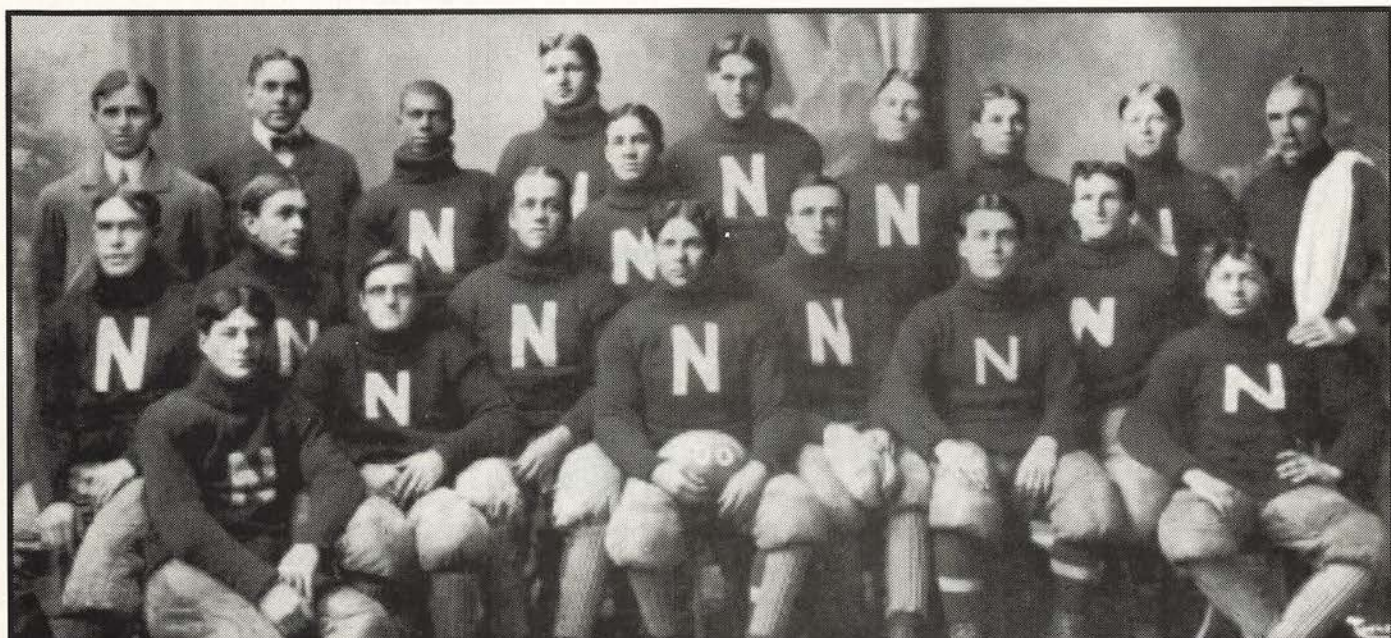
Kubik played admirably in 1997-98 and earned third team All-Big 12 honors after averaging 13.2 points and leading the conference in steals per game.

Sanderford likes Kubik's basketball intelligence and ability to break down a defense and take the ball to the basket. This year, he is looking for better decision-making from his floor general, who will get plenty of attention

from opposing defenses with DeForge gone.

"Basically there wasn't much focus on Nicole last year," Sanderford said. "Now she's got to be able to step up to the plate and go against teams' best defensive player every night."

Junior classmates Charlie Rogers, Brooke Schwartz, Naciska Gilmore and Monique Whitfield can help open



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things up for Kubik, Sanderford said.

Rogers, Schwartz and Gilmore combined to start 26 games a year ago, but each was hampered by injury.

Rogers, a center from South Sioux City, Neb., averaged 9.6 points and 4.8 rebounds a year ago. This season, Sanderford is hoping a healthy Rogers can give his team as many as 30 minutes and 18 points a game.

Schwartz, a guard from Gering, Neb., has the ability to become Nebraska's next go-to player. A year ago she averaged 7.8 points while playing barely 16 minutes a game.

"She's strong and quick and very athletic," Sanderford said. "Sometimes she has mental lapses — she'll go into the ozone — but we're trying to eliminate that."

Sanderford is also asking for more intensity from Gilmore, a forward from Tulsa, Okla., who averaged nearly six points and four rebounds a year ago.

Cori McDill, a forward from Gillette, Wyo., is the only senior with starting experience. After an outstanding offseason, Sanderford expects McDill to vastly improve on her 1997-98 marks of 4.9 points and 3.3 rebounds a game.

Monet Williams and Kate Benson are also expected to play larger roles in their final season at NU.

Anything Nebraska gets from senior Lisa Reitsma will be a bonus.

Reitsma, a 6-foot-4 senior from Sanborn, Iowa, is playing basketball for the first time this season after starring four seasons for the Husker volleyball team.

"She has to play defense, rebound and block shots," Sanderford said. "She amazes me with how quickly she picks up things. But she's still a step behind on her fundamentals."

Other newcomers expected to contribute include freshman guards Candace Blackbird, Jennifer Jaracz and Karsen Muller, who has been slowed by injuries during the preseason.

Amanda Went, the only freshman who gained significant playing time a year ago, returns as Nebraska's best three-point shooting threat.

Sanderford said the ingredients are in place for an outstanding year, but nothing will come easy.

"We have established the reputation at the University of Nebraska that we will not be outworked or outhustled," Sanderford said. "I think that if this team makes the commitment to work and improve, we could be a very good team by the end of the season." ■

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A Nice Problem To Have

How talent-rich is the Nebraska volleyball team? Consider the fact that the leading hitter in all Big 12 Conference matches has a hard time finding a spot on the Huskers' side of the net.

Without senior **Megan Korver** or junior **Tonia Tauke** as teammates, **Jenny Kropp** would almost certainly be starting in her freshman season at NU. However, playing behind Korver and Tauke in matches and across the net from that duo in practice has helped Kropp to develop as much as any freshman in coach **Terry Pettit's** 22-year tenure at Nebraska.

"Jenny Kropp is really a big-time player," Pettit said.

"You hesitate to say something like that about a freshman, but I don't think we've had a freshman middle blocker that is as comfortable and performs as well as she does on the court."

"If we weren't so experienced at that position, she'd be starting. She's not only going to be a good player, she's very good right now."

Kropp, a 6-foot-2 stand-out from Grand Island (Central Catholic), Neb., has played in nearly half of Nebraska's games. She's recorded 54 blocks and had a hand in 26 NU blocks.

In Big 12 matches alone, Kropp has posted a sparkling hitting percentage of .438. She played significantly in a stretch of league matches in which Korver was slowed by injury.

"I think I've made a lot of improvements from the beginning of the year," Kropp said. "A lot of it has to do with the girls on my team. If I would let down one

play, they'd be all over me. I just have to go out there and try hard every play."

Nebraska, off to a 22-0 start, remained ranked third in the *USA Today/AVCA* coaches' poll. The Huskers improved to 13-0 with a win over nationally-ranked Colorado. Nebraska faces ranked opponents in seven of its last eight regular-season matches.

SHOOTING BLANKS

A backup goalkeeper blocked Nebraska from winning the Big 12's regular-season women's soccer title.

Baylor freshman **Megan Jones**, playing in place of injured All-Big 12 pick **Dawn Greathouse**, saved nine shots in the Bears' 1-0 win over Nebraska earlier this month. The victory on the final day of the regular season allowed 9-0-1 Baylor to slip past 9-1-0 Nebraska for the league title, its first in any Big 12 sport.

"We're disappointed because we played a really good game on the road,"

said Nebraska coach **John Walker**, whose team last won the crown in 1996. "It was just one of those games where we didn't finish our chances."

The Huskers, 14-3-1 overall, owned the statistical edge in shots (15-6), shots on goal (9-2) and corner kicks (8-0), but were shut out for the first time this season. The loss also ended Nebraska's 13-game unbeaten streak.

Nebraska, however, landed six players on the All-Conference first team led by league Player of the Year **Kim Engesser**. Other first team picks included Husker defenders **Sharolta Nonen** and **Isabelle Morneau**, midfielders **Amy Walsh** and **Becky Hogan**, and forward **Lindsay Eddleman**.

Nebraska was the No. 2 seed in the postseason conference tournament at San Antonio, where it could again face Baylor for the league title. The Huskers were expected to land at least one home game in the 48-team NCAA Tournament. ■

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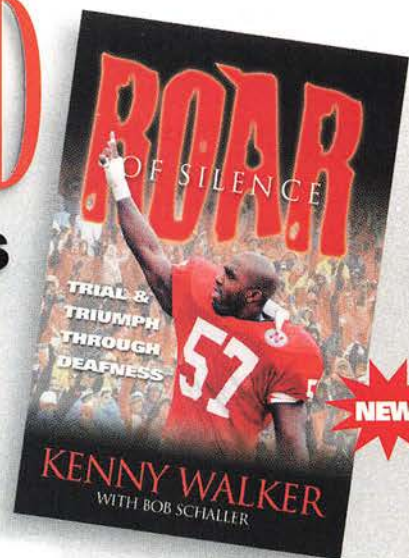
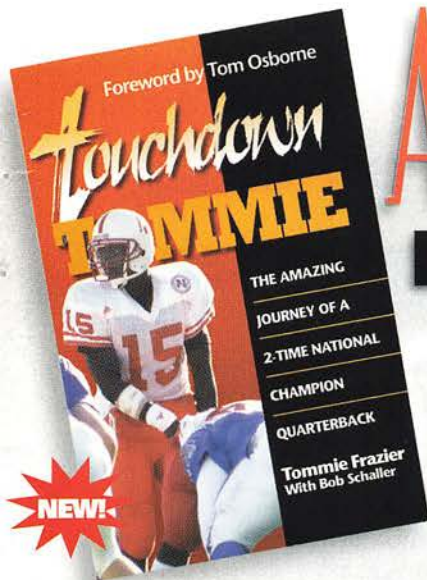
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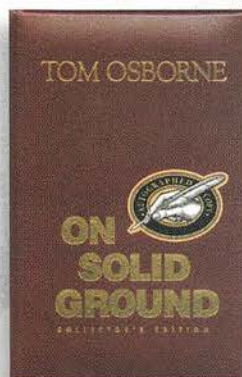
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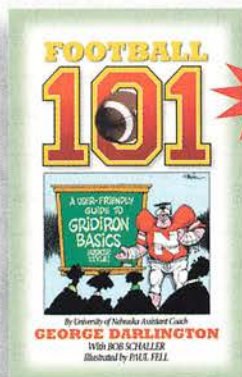
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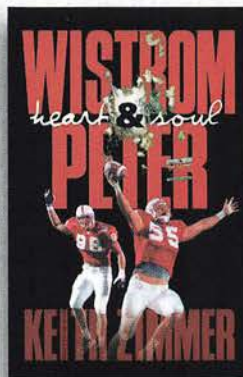
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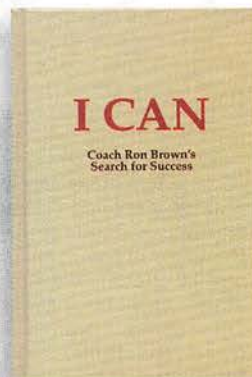
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Quarterbacks are always a priority in recruiting, but if you look at the schools in the Big 12, you realize that this season quarterbacks are a must at a number of schools.

Even Nebraska, which signed the top two run/pass quarterbacks in the country two years ago, now feel they don't have enough quality depth on the roster behind injured starter Bobby Newcombe. The Cornhuskers already have visits set with three of the top six run/pass quarterbacks in the country, including top-rated **Chris Massey** of Spiro, Okla.

Colorado is starting Mike Moschetti, a junior college transfer, and his backup, Adam Bledsoe, has struggled. Two true freshmen back them, but they are untested. The Buffaloes are back on the market and are in the hunt for **Kyle Boller** of Newhall (Hart), Calif., and **Chris Lewis** of Long Beach (Poly), Calif. Both are rated as two of the top 10 quarterbacks in the country.

Oklahoma is desperate for a take-charge signal-caller. The Sooners want to sign one junior college quarterback for immediate depth and at least two prep quarterbacks.

Missouri already has its quarterback of the future in **Darius Outlaw** of Power Springs (Paulding County), Ga. Outlaw was an unknown at the beginning of the year, but with his 6-foot-5 frame and 4.5 speed in the 40-yard dash, he is drawing attention nationwide.

Texas A&M signed an outstanding quarterback last season in **Vance Smith** but lost Brannndon Stewart. **Colby Freeman** of Brownwood, Texas, is a key to the Aggies' recruiting at quarterback.

Texas is in on two of the top passing quarterbacks in the country and Freeman, as well. **Chris Simms** of Franklin Lakes (Ramapo), N.J., is the son of NFL great Phil Simms and ranked by many as the top quarterback in the country. Simms has already visited Tennessee and says he will visit Texas, Penn State and Michigan for sure.

Eli Manning of New Orleans (Newman) has the Longhorns ranked No. 1, with Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, LSU, Tulane and Virginia also on his list.

Kansas State graduates Michael Bishop and is targeting Massey to replace him.

Iowa State loses Big 12 passing leader Todd Bandhauer, Kansas needs at least two quarterbacks, Oklahoma State is looking to add depth behind Tony Lindsay and Baylor is still looking for a quarterback to take over the position. ■

Recruiting Trail Still Under Construction

Eleven of the nation's top prep athletes have committed to play at Nebraska, and more blue-chippers are on the way

By James HALE

The regular season is winding down, and the recruiting season is getting ready to get underway in earnest. Already the Cornhuskers have earned 11 early commitments and are very much in the running with a number of the nation's top 100 players. It's safe to say that the Cornhuskers are well on their way to another top 20 class that has a great shot of landing somewhere in the top 10.

Knowing that the Cornhuskers have at least half of their class already committed, it's interesting to find out just how well some of the early verbals are doing this season. Each of the early commitments have come from athletes the Cornhuskers coaches had a chance to coach and work with at their summer camps. The coaches had a chance to evaluate first hand their overall athletic talent and abilities.

In recruiting you always have guesswork, but with Nebraska that guesswork is often reduced to a minimum. Despite the early success, Nebraska continues to hit the recruiting trail looking for that elite player, while also keeping in contact with players they have already committed.

The most recent commitment for Nebraska is **Robin Miller** (6-0, 215, 4.6) of Kent, Wash., an extremely physical two-way player who stars as an outside linebacker and running back/fullback.

He camped with the Cornhuskers over the summer and is a player who could help Nebraska on either side of the ball.

Rob Blomeier (6-foot, 185 pounds, with 4.5 speed in the 40-yard dash) of Lancaster (Manheim Township), Pa., committed way back in the summer. He was expected to lead his team to a



Although they have already built a solid recruiting class, the Cornhusker coaches would love to add more quality blue-chippers. Among those who are still being pursued by Nebraska is **Chris Massey** of Spiro, Okla., who many recruiting experts believe is the top run/pass quarterback in the nation.

possible state championship as a quarterback and then join the Cornhuskers' defensive back corps. However, a serious shoulder injury has curtailed what promised to be a great senior season for Blomeier.

"Rob injured his shoulder in the first scrimmage of the year and it just never totally healed," said Mahneim Township head coach Mike Vertucci. "After the injury first occurred, we rehabbed the injury for four weeks and then worked him back into the lineup slowly. All of his doctors cleared him to play, but we didn't want to rush starting Rob in the secondary and as a receiver before working him back at quarterback."

"We were working to get him ready to play in game six against Cedar Crest," Vertucci continued. "This was a very important game for us if we were going to go to the state playoffs. Rob was limited throwing the ball, but he was still the best we had so he played. He took some really good hits in that game, and eventually we had to move him off of quarterback. We lost the game, but Rob was tremendous, playing with his injury and playing with such courage. The rest of the season we moved him to wide receiver and defensive back, and he's played well."

"Right now he is not healthy, but Rob has been working with a trainer because he wants to play in our last game. We hope he makes it, too, because not having Rob in the lineup just doesn't seem right."

Blomeier looked into having surgery, even consulting with Nebraska team doctors, and it was determined that it wasn't required. However, it's safe to say that Blomeier's injuries cost his team a shot at the playoffs.

"Rob is an outstanding player, and what he can do with a football under his arm is phenomenal," said Vertucci. "We have been in the fourth quarter with two minutes to play three different times and lost without Rob in the line-up. If Rob was at full strength I feel confident that we would be 9-0 going into the state playoffs. Especially in close games, Rob is an outstanding performer."

Ryon Bingham (6-4, 265, 5.0) of Sandy (Alta), Utah, is an early commitment who is having a spectacular season. Bingham is the first defensive tackle to lead Alta in tackles with 130 total stops, 11 sacks and 15 tackles for losses.

REP REPORT

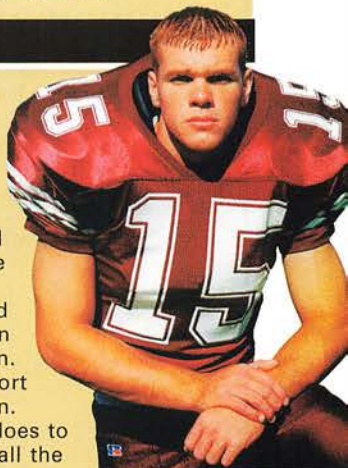
Keeping Up With COLBY FREEMAN

I REALLY DON'T think that later on in my career that it's possible to just have a running game. You have to throw the ball some to be successful. So, if somebody can run and pass, then that will be an advantage. It's something that I have worked on over and over the past two years, going out in the summer for two hours every day just to throw the football. The more opportunities I get, the more success that we have. It doesn't bother me that some people consider me a passing quarterback.

I went to Nebraska to watch the Cornhuskers and Longhorns. It was a last-minute deal. I had planned on relaxing and just watch a bunch of games on television. We ended up after our game Friday night staying in Fort Worth and flying out of there Saturday morning to Lincoln.

I was very impressed with the things that Nebraska does to impress recruits. They don't sit there and talk football all the time. There were three-and-a-half hours before the game going through all the facilities, the weight room and their academic center. The way they stress academics was unbelievable. They take pride in their academics. It was an impressive deal to say the least. They really give you a full picture of what they expect of you if you come there, and it makes you feel like not just a football player, but that you are a person to them as well. The game was very exciting too.

Last week was the very first time that I started to look at visiting dates. We don't want it to be a last-minute deal where we are trying to jam things in. I am still looking at Nebraska and Texas A&M, but some things have changed. I am looking at different offenses and like what I see from Syracuse and Oklahoma. I am going to stay home this weekend and watch the Texas A&M-Oklahoma game to study further what those two teams are doing. Texas is still in the picture, too. ■ — **As told to James Hale**



Colby FREEMAN

Throughout the 1998 football season, Huskers Illustrated will chronicle the recruiting process of Brownwood quarterback Colby Freeman, one of the top prospects in Texas.

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"Ryan is such a great physical specimen that he's impossible to stop," said Alta head coach Mitch Lunak. "He has great speed for his size, can bench press the world and plays with a tremendous temperament. He is a blue-chipper through and through. Ryan is the best I have seen in Alta in my 20 years of coaching."

Fullback **Judd Davies** (6-2, 240, 4.5) of Omaha (Millard North) has stayed healthy all year and led his team to a 9-1 record. Davies rushed for 1,350 yards and 19 touchdowns this year and North posted a 62-7 first round playoff win over Omaha South.

"I am real excited about going to the University of Nebraska," said Davies. "As our season is winding down, I have started to look at Nebraska and really begun to feel as if I am already a part of them. I think of them as my team and watch them very closely."

Strong safety **Taylor Reinert-Gehman** (6-0, 190, 4.6) of Omaha (Northwest) once again led the state in overall tackles. He put up huge numbers this season after recording 180 tackles a year ago.

"Taylor has had a real good senior

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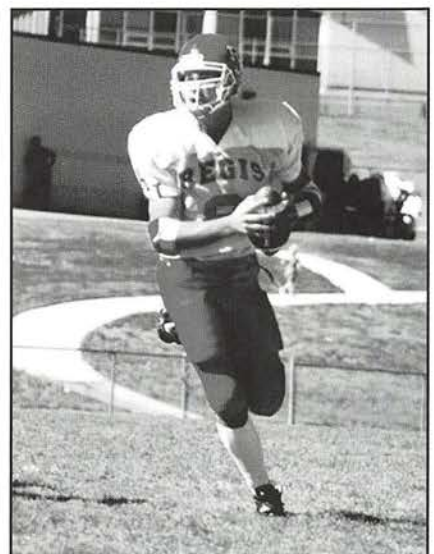
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Shaun Coleman of Aurora, Colo., has remained firm in his commitment to Nebraska.

year," said Northwest head coach George Drinnin. "Taylor has a great knack of knowing where the football is and then getting to it and making the tackle. We basically use him as a third linebacker because he is physical enough to handle it, yet athletic enough to cover in the secondary if we need him to. He has great athletic abilities and he just explodes to the ball."

Phil Peetz (6-2, 251, 4.9) of Elkhorn, Neb., is a key figure on the No. 1 ranked team in the East. Elkhorn was 10-0 at press time, and despite enduring a couple of injuries, Peetz is playing well.

"My senior season has gone OK, but my injuries have dragged me down a little bit," said Peetz. "I have a shoulder problem that is going to be operated on at the end of the year and broke my hand the day before we started the playoffs. Now, I will have to learn to play with a cast."

Defensive end **Spencer Owen** (6-5, 235, 4.79) of Carrollton, Mo., is already over 20 sacks for his senior season and his team is still in the playoffs. Owen may be the steal of the recruiting season, as he is an incredible pass rusher and will only get bigger and stronger once he gets in the Husker weight program.

Outside linebacker **Shaun Coleman** (6-4, 212, 4.5) of Aurora (Regis Jesuit), Colo., running back **Josh Davis** (5-11, 195, 4.5) Loveland, Colo., tight end **Trevor Johnson** (6-4, 225, 4.69) of Lincoln (Northeast), offensive lineman **Chris Loos** (6-3, 301, 5.2) of Lincoln (Southeast) are all still solid commitments to the Cornhuskers.

While many programs look to the junior college ranks for immediate help, Nebraska usually chooses to offer most of its scholarships to prep athletes. This allows the Cornhusker coaches to develop young talent for four or five years, rather than for just two.

Nebraska will normally spend only one or two scholarships a year on junior college players, if that many. It all depends on whether or not the Huskers have found an outstanding talent, or if they have lost out on the prep scene at a specific position on the field.

Word is that the Huskers may be looking at a pair of junior college running back to bolster their rushing corps for immediate help next season.

At Northwest Mississippi JC, **Kevin Jones** (5-8, 180, 4.4) has rushed for around 1,400 yards and is drawing national attention from top programs. Nebraska, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Tennessee and Mississippi State are considered the early leaders for Jones.

Delavon Flower (6-1, 185, 4.5) of El Camino, Calif., is another speedy All-American running back who is currently looking at Nebraska, USC, Washington State, Arizona State and Colorado. ■



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Cornhuskers Stand Tall In The Face Of Adversity

Although they have lost three conference games for the first time since 1976, Nebraska players and coaches refuse to give up on the season



**Mike
BABCOCK**

SHELDON JACKSON REFUSED to make excuses.

Kansas State was a "good team," the senior tight end and co-captain said following Nebraska's 40-30 loss against the Wildcats. "Take nothing from their win. But I still believe the best team in the country has three losses and an 'N' on their helmets."

That team would be the Cornhuskers, of course, who lost for the third time this season and for the first time against Kansas State since a considerably less pleasant day — Nov. 9, 1968.

All three of the losses have been against conference opponents, something that hasn't happened to Nebraska since the 1976 season, when the Cornhuskers finished in a fourth-place tie.

The best Nebraska can do now is finish in a second-place tie with Missouri in the Big 12's North Division, and a tie for third in the conference overall. That's the best, remember.

The Cornhuskers could finish lower, depending on whether they win against Colorado the day after Thanksgiving and the pending outcomes of the Kansas State-Missouri and Texas A&M-Texas games.

As Jackson's remark indicates, however, Nebraska is not about to give up. It has pride for which to play, if little else. But pride should be enough.

"Our season is not over. We will move on," coach Frank Solich said.

The Cornhuskers had no reason to hang their heads when they left Wagner Field at KSU Stadium. They were given little chance by the oddsmakers against an undefeated Kansas State team that has been pointing for them since last Dec. 31, when the Wildcats defeated Syracuse in the Fiesta Bowl.

During Nebraska's weekly news conference on the Tuesday before the Kansas State game, a television reporter from Wichita asked Solich if the Wildcats had replaced Oklahoma as Nebraska's chief rival.

"I'll tell you, it appears to me that we've got a lot of rivals," Solich replied.

"And I mean that seriously because every time we step on the field against an opponent — this program has won so much and within the last four or five years, won more than anybody — that we get everybody's best shot. If everybody's not trying to build their program around beating you, they feel their program's there and they want to prove a point. So you're always going to get someone's best shot."

Kansas State got the Cornhuskers' best shot, and in the process, had some anxious moments.

Nebraska last lost three games in a season in 1992. The last time it lost three regular-season games was in 1977. And the last time it lost three conference games was in previously mentioned 1976.

"We're going to bounce back," said Kelsay, who, as a senior, has only two more games to make good on that assertion — the Colorado game and a non-New Year's Day bowl game of some sort.

The Cornhuskers last played in a non-New Year's Day bowl in 1980 when they defeated Mississippi State 31-17 in the Sun Bowl.

While Kansas State tries to earn its way into the Fiesta Bowl where it would play for the Bowl Championship Series national title, Nebraska will try to position itself for a lesser bowl.

The Big 12 has agreements with the Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl (No. 2), the Culligan Holiday Bowl (No. 3), the Builders Square Alamo Bowl (No. 4) and the Insight.com Bowl (No. 5).

The truth is, a Nebraska victory against Kansas State would have been a significant upset because the Wildcats were as good as advertised, at least on offense.

"They will never be out of games because of their big-play ability," said Solich. "They've got a lot of things that make up a good team."

On the other hand, Kansas State is senior-heavy while many of Nebraska's key players will return next season, including Bobby Newcombe and DeAngelo Evans, who was sidelined by a severe tailbone bruise and didn't make the trip.

If the Wildcats hadn't won this year, the losses to Nebraska might have gone on indefinitely. Given the players coming back, Nebraska should return to the top of the Big 12 next season.

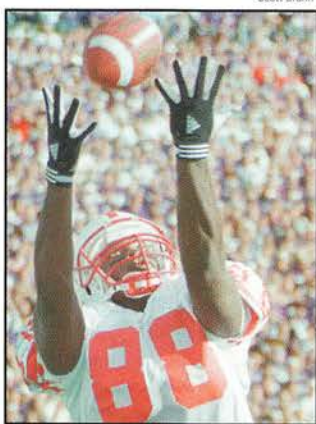
"This game gives me, personally, a lot of hope for this team," said junior offensive tackle Adam Julch. "We had all the opportunities. We just kind of shot ourselves in the foot a couple of times."

At times, they looked like the Cornhuskers of old. They just couldn't sustain it for four quarters.

Even though there are only two games remaining, "we want to try to get better," Jackson said.

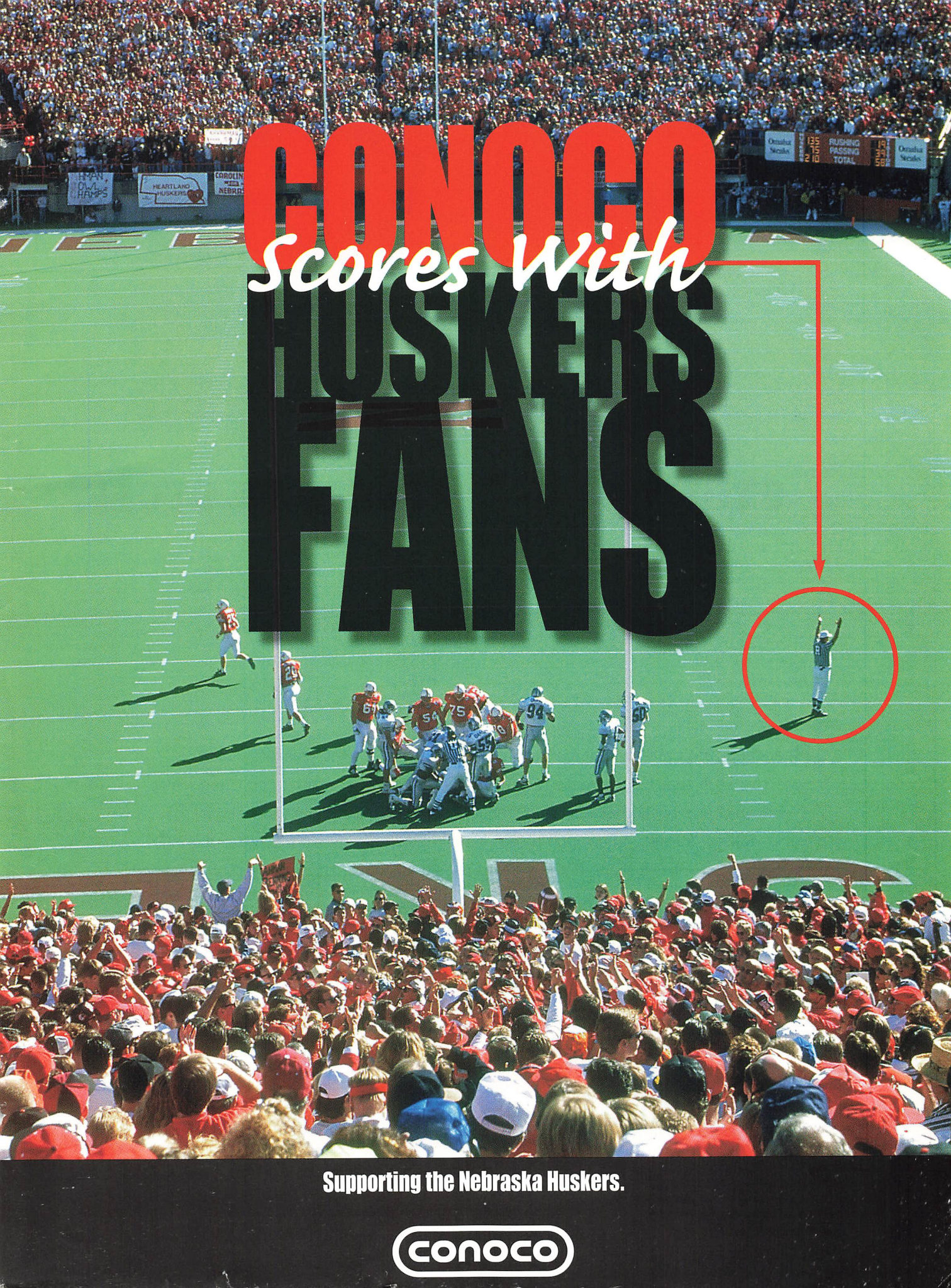
He was asked what positive things could be taken from the loss.

"I'll guess I'll find that out on Monday, when we watch the film," he said. ■



Scott Bruhn

Despite the loss to Kansas State, Sheldon Jackson still believes that Nebraska is the best team in the country.



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